STRANGE STORIES
OF THE
GREAT RIVER

JOHNSTON GROSVENOR

Miss. Williams

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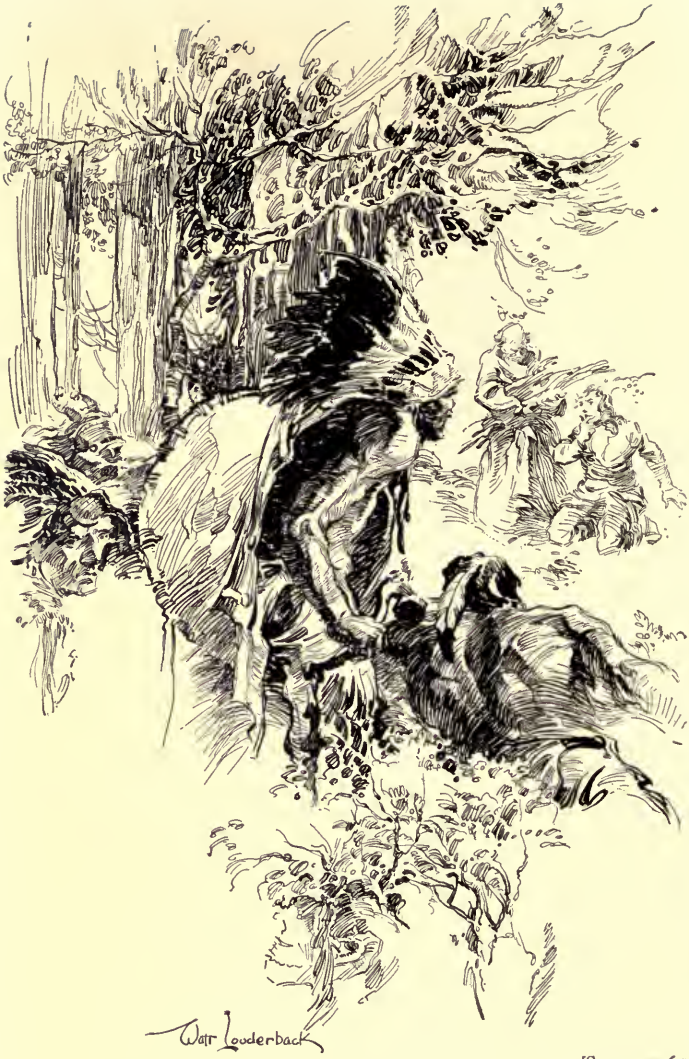

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HE HAD THE UNCANNY FEELING OF BEING WATCHED

STRANGE STORIES OF THE GREAT RIVER

THE ADVENTURES OF A BOY EXPLORER

BY

JOHNSTON GROSVENOR

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STRANGE STORIES OF THE GREAT RIVER

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FOREWORD

THERE is a river so long and wide that it is the pride of our continent; a very Father of Waters.

It draws many other streams into its basin and forms the largest drainage system in the world.

In early days this Great River was almost unknown. A few savages had paddled their skiffs upon it. Curious tales were told about it. Monsters guarded it. Sorcerers lived in its caverns. Mystic creatures both good and bad swam through its rapids.

After the New World was discovered some daring French explorers longing for adventure traveled into those wilds to see if they could find the hidden waterway of Indian romance.

One of them, a bold trader of Canada, in his scarlet coat and three-cornered hat, ventured into the farthest-away channels. Only one of his companions, a boy, came back with him to present the map he drew of the southern reaches of the mighty stream.

Next, a gray-frocked Belgian friar, sandaled and shaven of crown, set down on parchment the northern trend of the same river His goose quill wrote the name of his young oarsman who sang to appease their Indian captors as white men and red rode the waves together.

A nobleman of France in doublet and hose journeyed farther than all others into the wilderness of bayous and tributaries and wrote his tragic history in the foundations of the fortresses which he built and in the heart of a stripling who served him.

Wearing the armor of a knight and commanding a fleet of brigantines, another Canadian adventurer, half gentleman and half buccaneer, with a motley Old World crew—one of them a whistler—made a gallant defense of the river's mouth against the pirates of the Spanish Main.

And a wise young governor in robes and wig of state, whose favorite companion was a fiddler of famous name and title—so says a quaint old letter or two—began the battles which determined the reign of law and order upon the Mississippi.

All of these soldiers of fortune and their scribes, Joliet and Marquette, Accau and Hennepin, La Salle and Tonty, Iberville and Bienville, made notes of their voyages to please the king who sent them out.

From their records written in French long ago

and almost forgotten are taken these stories of the boy who shared in so many of their dangers and successes.

The French discovered most of the Mississippi. They were not the very first to see it, but they explored it, colonized it, and began its prosperity.

The United States has inherited the work of their genius.

Just as a nation lives at its noblest when it has the friendship and help of other countries, so a boy can better tell what to do with his own life when he hears the things that other lads have done. He will understand the present time after he has read the history of the past.

So with his plumed cap and his sword, with his whistle, his song and his fiddle, the French boy, Anthony Auguelle, the Picard du Gay, opens the brass lock of an ancient wooden-backed book, where he has been hidden, and walks out gaily to tell to-day's folks of the strange part he took in deciding the fate of the Great River and in the making of America.

J. G.

INDIANA, 1918.

STRANGE STORIES OF THE GREAT RIVER

I

A PAPER FLEET

Searching for the Father of Waters with the Indians' Friend, Jacques Marquette—A Voyage into the Unknown

A BOY was trying to learn a tune. He had an upper row of white, even teeth which showed attractively when he sang, so that he appeared quite like a cherub. But his two front lower teeth were crooked, overlapping each other irregularly, and leaving spaces through which he could whistle with many variations.

When he smiled these teeth gave him an impish expression. If he followed the smile with laughter, the dimples in his chin so emphasized the naughty look, that he seemed capable of any kind of mischief.

The quaint rhythm of the barbaric chant was

hard to follow. He had to bob his curly head, shuffle his feet, and beat out the time with his hands to separate this new air from the medley of sounds about him.

"Flip, flop," went the white wings of gulls in the blue Canadian sky.

"Caw, caw," scolded numerous crows in the green tops of pines.

"Quack, quack," cried the ducks feeding among the sedges on the shore.

Waters, spreading to the horizon on three sides of the peninsula where he stood, were as blue as the sky. Their waves, hurrying before a warm wind, came leaping on the golden sands with a "Siss, siss, s - w - i - s - h" of silver froth.

Gray sand-plovers ran back and forth over the beaches, "Pipe, pipe, piping," continually. In the newly made brown garden plots, a flock of blackbirds, "Chat, chat, chattered." Speckled meadow-larks rose from among the dandelions of the sparse grass with full-throated trills.

As a chorus background for these singers, and not in the least interfering with them, were three hundred Indians chanting with all their lung power.

The boy stood in a gateway of the log stockade which inclosed the grounds of the bark-shingled mission-house of Saint Ignatius. On the shore was a hamlet of French traders buzzing like a hive of bees. Near it a huddle of wigwams set

up by some visiting Ottawa savages was as full of clamor as a magpie family. Biggest and loudest of all boomed a Huron Indian village within its bark cabins behind its fortifications of picket fence.

On this commotion, which was characteristic of almost every French settlement in the New World at that time, shone the early morning sun of a bright spring day—an eventful and important day.

Traders and trappers and hunters were stopping here. Some were on their voyage up the big waterways to Lake Superior, others on the trip down toward Lake Erie, Niagara, and the settlements on the Saint Lawrence. For this mission on the peninsula of Mackinaw stood where three of the Great Lakes came together and attracted travelers, because it was such a central and good bartering point.

The half-civilized, half-Christianized Hurons, who loved trade, had taken this peninsula, put a stockade round their village, and, like good citizens, came regularly to mass at the mission each morning, before commencing their daily business of piling up wealth in the white man's fashion.

"The Indians are colored like a rainbow," the boy noticed. "Imagine a rainbow singing!" Through his pursed lips he was still struggling with that rainbow's tune.

Since this was to be a very special festal day, the Indians wished to do honor to it. "Behold us garbed in every one of the seven colors oft repeated!" their beads and feathers, paints and blankets of the gayest seemed to shriek.

After the long, dark, cold winter, the sunshine and the breeze stirred them pleasantly. The new season warmed the yeast of action in their veins. They felt the ancient instincts of their race stirring in response to the call of the rising year. This jolly old world is full of games and feasts. All rough and primitive sports have had their beginnings in just such days as this sparkling morning at Mackinaw.

Before the old chief of the tribe could preen himself to start the "O-o-o-oh, e-e-e-eh, ou-ou-ou-ouh" of the sunrise hymn which the priest of the mission had taught him to lead his braves in singing, an exuberant young Ottawa buck had followed his own wayward impulse and had burst into the wildest and most vigorous verse he knew.

Sacrilege! That verse was neither hymn nor anthem. It was a favorite scalp-song of his more savage cousins, the Chippewas.

In a moment other youths were humming it. They answered to its suggestion as the pines answered to the wind. New voices joined in at every repetition of its cadence. Its strains went to their heads and feet like fire-water. One by

one, as they took up the song, they felt its movement and they began to swing into the measures of a dance. They stepped out its time with their toes turned in.

The boy tried again to sing it. Then he managed to whistle it.

"It is an odd sort of music, but I love it. This concert suits the weather better than one of our doleful, slow, wet-blanket hymns," he thought, as he, too, began to sway back and forth. "I can't understand the words. But by the way that buck clutches at his cherished top-knot to emphasize the ditty, it must be some sort of a scalp-song he is singing."

Distant Hurons heard the first notes, saw the movements of the dancers, and came loping up, ready to fall into the vortex of play.

"Never, never, did I hear anything of the kind before," the boy breathed hurriedly, enchanted by the novelty of the hour. "Prick up, my ears, prick up!" He still found the tune difficult.

Indian musical intervals are a little different from the intervals in the white man's conventional scale. It takes a quick ear to catch them. A white man needs to be young and adroit if he hopes to imitate a savage in a native dancing song.

A new note was added to the uproar as a gentle voice said, "Anthony," and an appealing hand

was laid on the boy's sleeve. A black-gowned priest had stepped to his side. "Oh, Anthony, help me! My poor children do not know how they profane the church with that murderous song at its very door." The priest could understand the words of the scalp-song and he was filled with anxiety. "Quick! Think! What hymn can we adapt to that tune—that heathen tune? I cannot follow it as you are doing. What hymn can you sing to those measures? What hymn whose words they know? They must be diverted from scalping thoughts. Help me!" and the face of the priest, a Jesuit, young, handsome, pale with zeal, was bent upon his cavorting Indians in deep concern.

The lad, Anthony, called thus to his duty as choir-boy, answered almost at once: "Yes, Père Marquette, I will. Perhaps — perhaps — the Jubilate might do."

"Try it," begged the priest.

"Begin *now*," insisted a man who was the Jesuit's companion. He also was young, not more than thirty, and plainly a gentleman. He had the air of a soldier. That he was in full sympathy with the priest could be seen in the protecting stand he took beside the Père Marquette as though to make his vigorous body a shield for his slighter friend in case of trouble with the excited savages.

"Begin, Tony," he repeated, sharply. "Scalp-

songs started in play may end in deadly earnest. A brutal dance can lead them back to ferocious rites and tangle us all in a massacre."

"Yes, Sieur Joliet," and Anthony, hastily gathering up the skirts of his service gown, ran forward, jumped to the nearest stump-top, and threw out his arms in the form of the cross. The roots of his curls stirred oddly. He fancied he could feel them standing up. Yet he faced the mob with keen delight. He wanted to be in the thick of things.

With what beating hearts under their calm appearance at the post of duty the priest and the soldier of fortune watched the boy it would be hard to tell. Each was thinking: "To-day we begin the big work of our lives. Is our fortune to be lost for a song?"

Then a long melodious note, keyed high and sharp, struck like a sword across the confusion of noise and motion and color. Its very fineness cut its way. One exquisite boyish soprano rose above dozens of rough barytones and coarse basses.

The Indians threw up their heads at that clarion call.

For many weeks, under the good priest's guidance, the boy had tutored them in Church music. They had learned to listen for his key-note and to follow his instructions. His yellow pate, his wide gray eyes, his young grace and

confidence, his white angelic gown, all so different from their own swarthy gorgeousness, arrested their attention as nothing else could do. For a surprised and shuffling moment their custom of harkening to him struggled with their instinct for a spring orgy.

Sweet and clear—as compelling as a bugle summons—that long note came again.

They hesitated in the song. They stumbled in the dance. Confusion threw them out of tune and out of time. Then in the same key his voice took up the scalp-song. In an obbligato of purest quality he intoned each note. Their faltering and irresolution had broken their chorus. Their music dwindled away. He was left singing almost alone.

By surprising them he had overborne them.

He repeated the strain. Artfully he retarded it. He shaped his syllables into words. On their bewildered ears fell the prehistoric strains absolutely true and charming. But in perfect measures, familiar and desirable, came the Huron phrases which he sang each morning with them. He was fitting the music of the scalp-song to a Huron translation of a Catholic hymn. It was the Jubilate, "Oh, be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands!"

Their dancing feet, all ready for any motion, gradually fell into the time which his nodding head and his ringing tones marked for them—

the slower measures of the Church. And behold, they were *walking*, not *dancing*. The words of every day came back readily to their lips as he pronounced them distinctly and with reverence, "Serve the Lord with gladness!"

Paganism dropped into their souls and hid away. The wild children of the waters and of the forests began to move sedately toward the mission, singing to native music the canticle they should rightly be using at that hour, "And come before His Presence with a song!"

All Indians love noise. They have a childish joy in racket. Music good or bad catches their fancy. A rollicking tune sometimes controls them when prayers fall useless. Any sort of a singer finds favor with a missionary. The careless mocking-bird in Anthony's throat was the Père Marquette's chief aid, as he struggled out of one danger into another in going from fort to fort.

Anthony Auguelle was a waif out of France, gay and sunny as his own province of Picardy, a runaway, a stowaway, an emigrant; one small item in the unlisted riffraff tumbling over the side of some square-rigged hulk onto the shores of the New World. He had been in turn the companion of pirates and priests, of scullions and captains.

When his fighting spirit and his doubled fists could not make him a place, his voice could win

him bread. "Sing for your supper, Tony," was the command which any roustabout of a port might give him. Because of the joyousness of his chantey in response, he had cuddled warm in the shipping many a night between Havre and Quebec, and in the canoes between Quebec and Mackinaw, when others shivered neglected. The Picard du Gay they called him.

"To save his soul I will befriend the boy," was the priest's motive in attaching him to this expedition where there was much danger from savages. "To interest the Indians he ought to go with us," was the trader's idea.

The Tionnontateronnous Indians, whose name even the patient and ceremonious Jesuits felt obliged to shorten to Huron Indians for daily use, lived at Michilimakinac—dubbed Mackinaw —near the lake which was finally called Michigan instead of by its right name of Michihiganing. The Outaouasinagaux when hurried became Ottawas.

The Hurons were clever and had made friends with the French from the time of the founding of Quebec, foreseeing that peace, prosperity, and a helpful religion would come to them through the ministry of the Society of Jesus and the knowledge of the *coureurs de bois*, those French fur hunters and traders of the forests, who befriended the society's missionaries.

"We must have patience with untutored

minds," the priest had said in days past, when, through all the changes made by Indian wars and the shifting of fishing-places and hunting-grounds, he had followed these Indians. "You traders in my wake must treat the natives justly."

So when, at the feast of the Virgin in the previous autumn, there had come to this settlement that soldier and explorer, that prince of traders, the Sieur Joliet, with papers from Frontenac, the governor of Canada, which commissioned him to take their priest, the Père Marquette, and to go upon a voyage in search of a Great River—that water Messipi—of which some Indians had heard, but which no white man had yet seen, the Père Marquette's grateful Hurons were all alert to help the adventurous plan.

"What is good for priests and traders is good for us; it gets us beads and iron knives."

To Mackinaw, then, during the winter, was brought every fact and fancy the savages could find out about the Great Water.

To these bartering Indians new waterways discovered meant new fur lands opened. New lands opened meant more traders coming. More traders coming meant more wealth for the Hurons, just as it did for their ruler, His Majesty the King, Louis XIV of France.

"In the matter of greed," thought the naughty Anthony, "the frowsy savage in his blanket and the splendid king upon his throne are twins at heart." But in his secret mind he told himself: "When that brave gentleman, the Sieur Joliet, desires to go exploring for the glory of achievement, and when that pious aristocrat, the Père Marquette, accompanies him for the sake of the Church—ah, that is quite another matter. I make my bow to them."

Said Louis Joliet to Jacques Marquette: "Our Canadian governor has learned the importance of finding and taking possession of that mighty river which the western natives say runs from the northern lakes to the southern seas. Because I am Canadian born and educated and know many Indian languages and customs and the demands of various climates, I am chosen for the venture. I am glad that my orders are for you to make the voyage with me. There are gold-mines, jewels, and riches untold upon that river Messipi."

Said Jacques Marquette to Louis Joliet: "There are people upon that Great Water who have never heard of our religion. I am enraptured at the good news of my selection for the voyage. It gives me happiness to expose my life for the salvation of all these nations."

"If we find the river which will give this land a water path to the open seas and a way to the

ports of the earth, we will hold the destinies of empires in our hands. What is danger but the zest to make such ventures the greatest delight? We will add to the sum of human happiness and to the wealth of mankind," said the Sieur Joliet. And his friend replied, "I will count the whole world well lost if I save some heathen souls."

The time had come for setting out.

The enterprise was hazardous, but all care had been used in getting ready. And now, on the 17th of May, 1673, the whole concourse of Hurons, Ottawas, traders, and trappers trailed to the beach to see the start.

There stood the Indian canoes of the kind that made possible the early exploration of the New World. The savages, commanded by Sieur Joliet, blessed by Père Marquette, cajoled by Anthony, had made all new ones of birch bark—that *Birch papyracea*, paper birch—which is so easy to build, so fast to paddle, so light to carry.

In them this voyage was to be made.

Anthony was packing the stores. "Here is maize in plenty; there is jerked venison."

Two articles! Indian corn and dried meat! This was the whole stock of food for men who were to go on a precarious journey of unknown length. There were some treasures of beads and trinkets and gay cloth; much ammunition for the guns was in the load.

Besides these articles each canoe was built to carry three full-grown men. There were two canoes.

Into the first one stepped the Sieur Joliet and a couple of *coureurs de bois*. The second canoe received one *coureur de bois*, one undersized half-breed interpreter, the slender Père Marquette and his choir boy, Anthony. Seven men in all.

Seven men in all! For one of the biggest ventures of any age!

Seven men in all! For one of the greatest achievements in the world!

Strange that they should try it! Stranger still if they should win!

Each man had a gun and a paddle and the clothes upon his back. His main equipment was his strength of purpose, his faith in himself. The commander of the expedition carried a sword. The priest bore a tiny traveling-altar.

They took up their paddles and set their prows toward the lake.

The lively bucks on shore again began the old, old chant. They used the words of the Jubilate. That meant they were promising to be good children. The Hurons could be trusted to keep the fort in peace.

Oh, tiny fleet of birch bark! Oh, little band of explorers in paper craft! As they disappeared over the horizon in a nimbus of gold,

how could the loyal band of natives who watched the departure understand the high hopes of those brave French hearts? Or dream that the voyagers were trying to find the longest river system in the world? Or that out of their adventures should grow such interest and investigation and settlement as to make the valley of the Great River the happy home to-day of fifty million Americans?

They went through the Mackinaw Straits, across Lake Michigan, into Green Bay, and up the Fox River to its source; then by portage into the headwaters of a river which they spelled Mescousing but which they pronounced much like Wisconsin. They visited the wild-rice people—Oumalouminik, and the fire-folk—Aweatsewaenrrhonous, and gained more news of the West.

Many a school-boy of to-day, who has made himself a canoe in his manual-training class, knows that he can set it afloat in these same rivers and in a wet season follow Anthony's route along a water path as old as the first Indian—perhaps older.

As they drove along there was constant danger from the wilds. There was heavy toil at the paddles. But there was also the daily excitement of a chase for game and the ever fresh pleasure of country luxuriant and sunny unfolding before them.

They went far past all regions which the savages had described.

In fine June weather they came to the mouth of the Wisconsin. There they saw what northern white men had never seen before—the grand old Father of Waters rolling past!

They took a stand upon the shore at 42° 30′. The leather-clad *coureurs de bois*, happy and careless and hairy, their locks hanging down their backs, their beards covering their chests, their forearms and knees all overgrown like forest fauns, helped the black-gowned priest to make a huge rustic cross. The clouted half-breed dug a hole to plant it in.

Anthony, in buff jerkin, buckled shoes, and long hose, grew serious as he held the instruments of observation while the Sieur Joliet made the official notes and arranged upon the cross the lilies of France, the emblem of the Bourbons.

Then the Sieur Joliet removed his cocked hat. With the breeze stirring his handsome locks and his jaunty mustache, the sun glinting through the gold and silver embroideries of his skirted coat and on the soft polished leather of his cavalier boots, he drew his sword.

In the name of the king this picturesque group took possession of the Great River. This was the real beginning of progressive history of the famous stream so full of stories. It was a princely gift to France—a priceless boon to the world.

II

WHITE CALUMET

Carrying a Peace Pipe among Savages for the Commandant, Louis Joliet—Lost in the Rapids

THE rushes at the shore-line were broken and bent. Anthony, on watch, glanced across the prow of his canoe and saw on the low ground the prints of human feet! Marks of bare toes in the mud!

No need to signal, "Look out!" His electrical pause had run like wireless through both canoes. All fingers pointed to the same spot.

"Men! Savage men!"

Now this thing happened many, many years before the days of Robinson Crusoe. That man Friday with the large historic feet was not yet born. This surprise was all the Frenchmen's own.

After coming for hundreds of miles in primeval loneliness and spending weeks without seeing a human face, these tracks filled the explorers with curiosity and with caution. They noted

the traces with swift decision. All wanted to land and investigate.

"I must speak my message to every nation," said the priest, picking up his tiny altar.

"There is a path, well beaten, leading inland," the Sieur Joliet pointed out as he loaded himself with trinkets. "We two will go ahead and make friends. Stay offshore on guard, you others, until we send for you," and both leaders disappeared through the long grass of the rolling meadow.

After what seemed a wait of many hours, the impatient watchers saw upon the path the figure of an Indian youth running toward them. He stopped suddenly with hand outstretched when he neared the water's edge.

The interpreter gave him greeting in Algonquin, that common tongue of midwestern natives, "How welcome are the feet of the messenger who comes in friendship!"

The answer was in a boyish treble, a trifle breathless, in the language of the Illinois, a form of the Algonquin. The sentences were clear and so slowly spoken that in spite of their astonishment at the age of the runner they understood him. "How beautiful, O Frenchmen, is the sun when thou cometh to visit us! Our town awaits thee! Thou shalt enter our cabins in peace!" Having made the speech taught him, he held out a piece of white paper as a token of good faith.

So the explorers paddled in and gazed at the youth with interest. He was not as tall as Anthony, nor so heavy. He was straighter and more supple than any white boy could ever be. His head, tufted with a chieftain's scalp-lock, was set arrogantly on his slim round neck. No traveler, however observing, could have described his clothes. He hadn't any!

His hair and eyes were black; his teeth were very white by contrast; his features were straight and delicate.

On his left wrist, which he placed against his heart to conceal, with Indian instinct, even so natural a function as its rapid beating from his hurrying, he held an iridescent passenger-pigeon.

A piece of paper in an Indian country was a guarantee of a white man's summons. They followed it with confidence. Anthony began immediately, "My name's Tony. What is yours?"

The little Indian threw back his head in the haughtiest of gestures, "He who speaks is a slave. He is called the Wingèd One, a son of the greatest sachem of the Southwest tribes. By his captors—lean dogs of Illinois—he has been given to the Black-gowned One and to the white man with beads who is master of the Black-gown."

To Anthony's puzzled look the interpreter replied: "Some Indian tribes sell or give as pres-

ents the captives they take in conquest. They have traded him to Sieur Joliet for beads."

So swiftly had the Wingèd One come to them that they had gone some distance on the path before they began to meet the groups of savages who had plainly started from the village when he did and had been outdistanced. They were strung out all over the prairie according to the speed they had been able to make trying to keep up with the Wingèd One. They, too, were dressed in a costume of Mother Nature's designing, the close-fitting garment of their own skins.

"Don't be afraid," said the half-breed, "all they want is to look at us." And sure enough, the stragglers passed quietly, devouring with their eyes these so queer folks from the other side of the world.

Vivid with interest, Anthony laid a friendly hand on the Wingèd One and showed his delightfully crooked teeth in a grin of comradeship. The savage returned it with a cool stare, but the color spreading in a deep blush, wave upon wave, from brow to toes, under his bronze skin, showed that the compliment had gone home to his lonely little slave heart. His agitation made the pigeon flutter at his side.

At this response, Anthony threw back his head and laughed aloud. Indians have a sense of humor, but they do not yield to laughter as this French boy did. The merry sound drew the

little slave to him and the two strays, one from Picardy, one from the desert, went together to join the trader and the priest.

Hundreds of Indians, inhabitants of three villages, had come to see the white men. They were gathered in the open space in front of the sachem's bark tent. An envoy made a speech of greeting:

"We thank thee for taking so much pains to come and visit us. Never has the earth seemed so lovely nor the sun so bright as to-day. Never has the Great River been so calm nor so free from rocks. Your magic canoes have removed all obstacles as they came. Never has our tobacco tasted so fine nor our corn looked so thriving. Come and dwell with us that we may know your Manitou!"

To honor the guests a busy preparation for a grand feast was going forward in the center of the town. There was to be smoking of the peace pipes. Most splendid of all, a dance of the calumet was soon to begin.

Warriors strutted in the front rows of the crowd. Squaws slipped to the back. Men and women singers gathered under a tree. Little red cubs of babies scuttled in and out. Dogs got under everybody's feet. The sun was going down and firelight and twilight mingled with the shadows.

On a mat of woven rushes lay the all-powerful

calumet. It was a pipe with a red-stone bowl for tobacco and a long hollow stem of two feet or more. Feathers of the white eagle decorated it. Red feathers would have meant a calumet of war—and destruction to the guests!

This calumet was to be given as the greatest of all compliments to the bead-bringing visitors. It was a passport, a letter of credit, and a talisman to any group of strange Indians.

When the music for the dance began all the Indians sang the same air, but they sang in octaves. The soprano of the women and boys, the barytone of some men, the bass of others, produced a chorus full and rich. Drums, many high, a few low in tone, supplied the place of harmonized chords which Indian composers cannot manage. To this accompaniment, weird and incomplete, but agreeable to Anthony's ear, the dancers stepped in perfect time and graceful swaying as they kept to the long-drawn-out, bewildering, and sweetly monotonous round upon round.

As the shining copper-red bodies of the dancers gyrated, their shadows leaped and fell. When the firelight flickered, the eyes of the watching hundreds squatting in the background glowed green like fox-fire.

In the pauses of the music speeches were made and more presents given, first by the sachems and then by the Frenchmen.

The French had so strong a passion for courtesy as to carry their good manners even into the wigwams of savages. In return the natives were glad to honor such guests with barbaric splendor. Perhaps of all the strange things that have happened on the Great River none is stranger than the fact that white men of a later day should have forgotten the politeness with which the clever Illinois nations first received their race and should have rudely and greedily turned such powerful allies into revengeful foes.

As they went on down the river the priest handled the calumet gingerly and carried it in a prominent place. "Odd!" he said, "that a toy of feathers should be the god of peace and war! In a wilderness where brute force and cunning seem to hold sway that the power of an idea—a fanciful amulet—should be the arbiter of life and death! That scientific explorers should pin their hopes to an eagle's plume!"

As they went from one village to another some natives showed them hospitality, some indifference, some hatred, but all were obedient to the white calumet's demand for peace. "Men do not give to the crowns and scepters of kings the honor Indians pay to the calumet."

Very often at sunrise Anthony could prophesy to the little slave: "To-day we will come to a wattled hamlet. The Sieur Joliet will give

knives and trinkets to the sachems. The Père Marquette will preach. Each Indian will touch my curls to feel if they are real and ask what kind of a stone I use to file my teeth nice and crooked so the songs will come through." At sunset he could add, "I told you so!"

But when on a quiet morning at 33° latitude the little slave foretold, "The Wingèd One to-day will meet many enemies," Anthony did not believe him, for none of the white men could see signs of Indians.

"In yonder elm a sentinel sits."

The explorers glanced sharply about; nothing showed among the leaves.

"Above the whitewood a smoke signal rises."

Only summer drifts of cloud met their gaze.

"Red men stalk the white."

It was unbelievable; the level shore spaces were empty.

"Ambushed!" cried the child. "Hold up the calumet!"

Wooden pirogues loaded with armed savages swung across the Mississippi in front of them. A startled backward turn showed them another barrage of the same sort cutting off retreat up-river. On both shores painted and feathered men sprang up by dozens to howl like fiends. They leaped into the water to catch the canoes. A kindly eddy swirled the birch barks out of reach. Whoops of rage burst from the warriors.

A shower of arrows chased the explorers. Tomahawks whizzed close.

They ducked; ducked promptly.

Not so the little slave. He stood erect and let a tomahawk snip off half his cherished topknot without flinching.

An Indian child baiting warriors caught the attention of the old braves. They scanned him so closely that they saw the calumet at which he pointed. They hastened to throw down their bows and arrows in token of submission to the peace pipe. Magic calumet!

Anthony did not enjoy the visit which followed nor the meetings with other inhabitants of this group of villages. He had a constant desire to look behind him. There was often a queer weakness in his knees. He wanted to keep his curly scalp close to the white eagle feathers. The temper of these observers of the calumet's command was not all he wished it might be.

Yet when one of the Akamsea sachems stood up in formal pow-wow his words were fair. And he was agreeable to look upon. He was tall. He was straight. He shone like a copper candlestick. He had on his best clothes—that is, there was a blue quill in his nose and a red one over his left ear. For the rest he wore a blank expression and he carried his own white calumet.

He told them, "Only once has a white man seen our Great River," then added, with cold

significance, "He lies buried here under the water."

He meant the Spaniard, Hernandez De Soto, who had come across the country from the southeast more than a century before, and who had died in 1541 on the banks of the Mississippi, which he was undoubtedly the first to find.

"A few days' paddling to the south will bring your canoes to the mouth of this Father of Waters; for it flows into the southern Gulf," the sachem said.

Where the Messipi went was one of the chief things the French wanted the Sieur Joliet to learn. This speech of the sachem was telling him exactly what he wished to know.

"Savage Indians, in league with white men who do not observe the calumet, infest the waters of the Gulf," was the sachem's next sinister hint.

If the Frenchmen and their maps fell into the hands of their rivals, Spain could claim and take immense territory just explored by the agents of France. How might seven men in birch bark hold out against the cutlasses and "six-pounders" of a galleon?

To keep what one has gained is better than to lose all in trying to win more. The Sieur Joliet gave one glance at the low-hanging pole-star, one word of command to his followers, and before his doubtful hosts could form a plan for or

against him the explorers were paddling with all speed up the Mississippi beyond the chance of pursuit.

The Wingèd One fed his pigeon chinkapin, which he called chechinquamin, with royal unconcern, but Anthony did his work nervously. "I am always kind to *our* slave," he thought, as he watched the little Indian with pity, "but I cannot be sure how the Spaniards will treat *me* if they catch us."

Slavery in various forms has been part of the Great River's life. After the news of its discovery had spread and vessels from many lands dragged their anchors at its mouth, captives red, white, brown, yellow, and black were traded to anybody and everybody for kegs of rum, or hogsheads of molasses, or bundles of tobacco.

Among the pioneers who later came to settle the prairies and woodlands of its fertile shores were numerous bound children, indentured servants and redemptioners. Then ship-load upon ship-load of stolen African negroes were brought to the fields of the South when the invention of the cotton-gin made their labor profitable. For nearly two hundred years the river washed away the tears of hapless bondsmen.

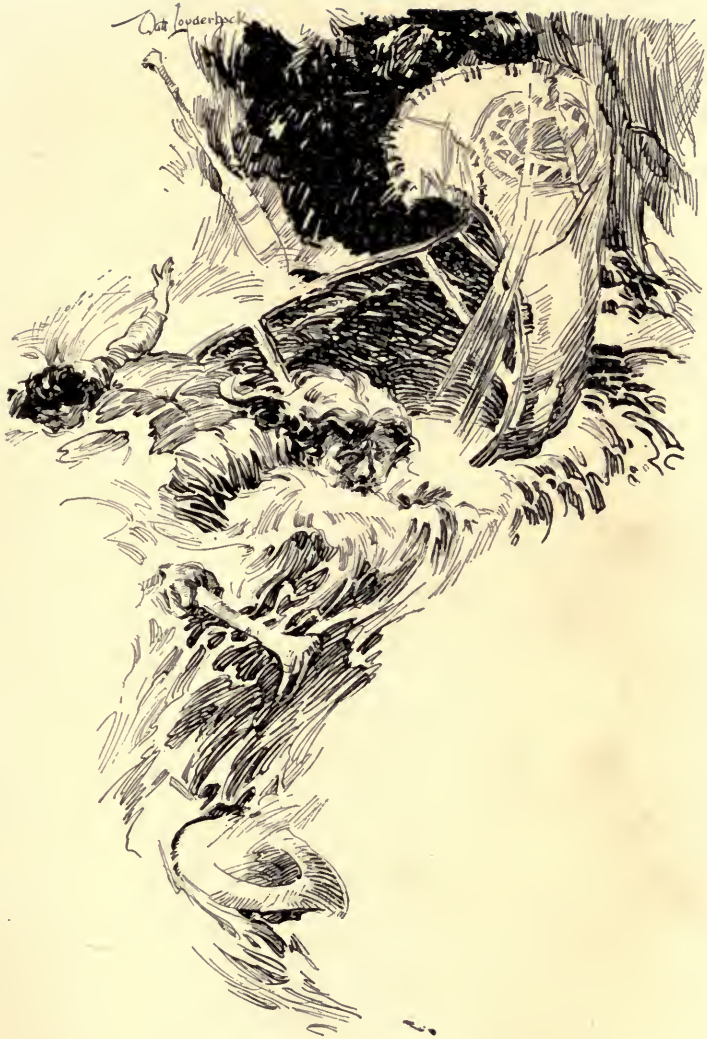
To escape any native pursuers whom his enemies might send after him the Sieur Joliet led his men up the Illinois River to the Chakakou, which the glaciers had twisted to run into Lake

Michigan, but which daring modern engineers have turned back again as it was in the very beginning, so that nowadays the system of the Great Lakes is partly drained into the Great River by the same *Chicago*, a geographical condition which was not true when Anthony helped to draw it on the maps.

Père Marquette went on to his Indians at Mackinaw. Sieur Joliet took Anthony and the little slave and one *coureur de bois* and kept on down toward Quebec to report. When at last they came near Montreal, full of the triumph of their great discovery, they had paddled, since the beginning of their venture, something like three thousand miles. It was two years since the leader had left this fort for the West.

It was an autumn morning. Brilliantly colored forests lined the shores, and between two big rocks, like a cathedral door, the rapids ahead sparkled in a vista of incomparable loveliness. Over them flights of migrating pigeons winged their way. The pet on the little slave's wrist cooed an instinctive answer to their call, rose in a flash of silver and soared into their midst.

With a cry of sorrow as though he were losing his dearest friend, the small chieftain sprang to his feet and threw up his hands as if to catch it as it flew. Too late to check this impetuous movement, the other three crouched low and



THE MEN WENT HEADLONG INTO THE RAPIDS

swung their bodies in a frenzied attempt to preserve the balance of the canoe. Useless! It capsized on the instant.

The men went headlong into the rapids. The canoe smashed against a rock.

All the heavy goods dropped to the bottom of the channel. Lighter stuff floated on the current a moment and then sank. Priceless notes and maps and drawings burst their waterproof coverings on a sharp projection, were scattered on a hundred waves, soaked with spray, hurled away, and utterly destroyed.

Anthony plunged to the bottom. Treading water he tore off his jerkin and came to the surface. He caught at an exposed stone. It was rough enough for a fingerhold and he might have saved himself had he not seen, sweeping past him, his Indian brother, the Wingèd One. Crushed by some cruel rock, lifeless, beyond all human help, the stripling royal, a slave no longer, drifted out into the happy hunting-grounds of all his race.

Strong arms grasped Anthony—pulled him up to blessed air. He was kept afloat and dragged free of the rapids. With the Sieur Joliet's fingers in his hair to help, he began to swim again. They gained the bank and clambered to safety.

But the *coureur de bois*—that laughing, hairy faun—had perished with the Indian.

In bitterness and despair the boy fell upon the sod and abandoned himself to grief.

The Sieur Joliet stood white and cold, like a ghost from whom all hope has fled.

Oh, the cruelty of fate! To carry them harmless through half a hundred rapids, only to shipwreck them in sight of home!

A long, hard voyage had come to naught; the proof of his greatest discovery was lost.

"I have nothing left but my life," he groaned.

Bruised and battered, soaking wet and in rags, they trudged on through a forest path. Sometimes they sank in utter weariness; oftener they supported each other with renewed courage. And so at last the fort came in sight and opened its comforting home-like gates to them.

Here the sorrowful Anthony saw the explorer give his empty hands to the commandant. It seemed to the boy that all the glory of their expedition had gone out in tragedy like the poor little slave who was lost in the rapids.

Imagine his astonishment when he received the command, "Bring me, Tony, a pot of ink and some quills."

The obedient Anthony, standing as assistant, with his gray eyes growing wider and wider with admiration, saw the Sieur Joliet set the quills to parchment. Under his skilful fingers there grew a picture of the course of the Great River as he recollected it. He drew its twists and turns,

its distances and latitudes, put down the location and the names of the villages where he had received the calumet.

It was a curious document of amazing accuracy. From it grew the further history of the Mississippi. Whenever an adventurer wanted to go a-wandering he studied this map. To Western explorers it became their book of A B C.

III

SIX SIOUX

Marching into Captivity under the War-bonnets, Who Caught Friar Hennepin—A Manitou Becomes a Miller

THE cold nose of a dog nuzzled into Anthony's ear. He woke with a jerk. Peeping from under the brush screen of his camp he saw a file of canoes drifting in the moonlight. He crouched low, pistol in hand, and waited. No wild animal of the wood could have held itself motionless any better than the boy did. His two companions were asleep, weapons ready at their sides. The little dog, trained in a hard school, stood like a pointer.

The canoes came on. Each silhouetted a dozen war-bonnets against the silver river; then it slowly vanished. One by one they went down-stream. Anthony sighed with relief. His path was up-stream. How much better to have the warriors pass in the night than to meet them on the river!

For northern Indians promptly murdered any

white men whom they found after dark. It was an easy way to win the steel knives which they coveted more than any other one thing. Travelers hid themselves at sunset, avoided prowlers in the gloaming, and tried to visit natives by day in villages known to be peaceful. The arms carried by a small trading party were of little use against a band of warriors.

Anthony lay down to rest again. He praised and petted the dog, who was proud to stay on guard. But he could not go to sleep. There might be more Indians, painted for battle, coming after these.

He was not as eager as usual for the voyage forward. Yet the backward route was impossible. Behind him lay his base of supplies, Fort Crevecœur, that unhappy post whose very name meant heartbreak. Its safety depended somewhat on the results of this journey of his, and he could not see much luck ahead if the river was going to be peopled with fighting-men of savage tribes.

Anthony was not equipped for war; only for defense. Besides the pistol he had a sword. It had been given him by the Sieur Joliet.

For his successful explorations the French government had rewarded the Sieur Joliet with the island of Anticosti, where he had established a manor and given the boy a home. From there Anthony had brought the sword and the pistol

and his ever-recurring wanderlust to an expedition which Robert Cavelier, called the Sieur La Salle, was fitting out to develop the Mississippi Basin.

Under a patent from the king several forts for trade and for defense had already been built. This one of Crevecœur was the Sieur La Salle's farthest outpost. It was the one French settlement to hold their claim in the Mississippi Valley.

They had built it without trouble from the gentle Illinois Indians, but the reckless adventurers who made up the troops which defended it became so unruly when they were shut up in the little stockade during the winter that a mutiny seemed always at hand.

No one knew when he laid his head on his pillow at night whether he would still be wearing it in the morning.

So far, the strong hand of the commander had kept the soldiers within bounds, but even he thought it wise to send out scouts as early as possible to the western waters who might bring back news of fresh discoveries, of more lands, perhaps gold-fields, to conquer. Then the troops would forget their quarrels and advance together under discipline in the hope of treasure trove.

A second group of traders promised to follow this first one to keep a line for traffic and mes-

sages open. Where Anthony went others could go. He was the scout.

A man named Accau was put in charge of ten thousand livres' worth of goods in beads and knives and trinkets, for trading with any Indians they might meet. A Franciscan friar, Louis Hennepin, was sent as a missionary to the natives.

"Anybody but us would be afraid to undertake such a journey," he had bragged, quite frankly.

"Perhaps you are, anyway," Accau had commented. "*I* am."

Anthony was glum and talked little. And the fourth member of this exploring party, a King Charles spaniel, Accau's pet, said nothing at all. A faithful sentinel he stood watch at night, fulfilled his round of duties, and found no fault with anything. King Charles was truly royal; it was a joy to belong to his court.

Their canoe had dropped down the Illinois and then turned north on the Great River.

They had fended off huge floating cakes of ice in the current; they had fought hungry bears on the bank; they had struggled with cold all the time and everywhere.

And now as he lay and watched with King Charles, on the lookout for more Indians on the river, Anthony had one of those blue moods which told him that he would probably have

trouble with savages on top of his other woes. For they had passed the mouth of the Wisconsin and were in country new to them. Glimpses of red men came oftener and oftener.

They continually looked for overhanging trees on the shore-line, and when they heard or saw savages coming they hid under the branches until the strangers had gone again.

But now in mid-April—it was the year of 1680—they found themselves in such a narrow and crooked channel that Accau became alarmed. "Go ashore," he commanded Anthony. "Peep around each bend and signal us to follow with the canoe if the way is safe."

The friar picked up his beads for a fervent prayer to his patron, Saint Anthony of Padua.

Alas and alack! All their caution came too late.

Without a sound of blade in the water, without a tone of human voice, a dozen or so of birch-bark craft swept round the point and swooped down upon them!

There were three or four war-bonnets in each canoe. It was a pursuing party such as Anthony had dreaded.

At the sight of quarry the savages broke the silence. They split the air with war-whoops. They surrounded the explorers' canoe; grabbed it; hustled it ashore. Big game!

The Frenchmen were confused with the

topsy-turvy handling, the flutter of feathers, and the deafening howls.

They tried to show a bold front. Père Louis said, "They cannot terrify me," and he coolly picked out the ugliest chief, a furrowed old sinner named Aquipaguetin, and presented the calumet. That worthy snatched it from the friar and left him at the mercy of the fierce young braves.

These youths were eager to destroy the Frenchmen. Dozens of stone knives and war-clubs were ready.

It was not mercy which stayed them. It was indecision.

How was any warrior to scalp such curious heads?

Above an odd white face unlike anything these savages had ever seen the Père Louis, neatly tonsured, had no hair in the place where hair ought to be. Accau sported a great beard. Whiskers were unknown among Indians.

King Charles, gazing from his hiding-place in his master's jerkin, showed a second hairy face. The savages were dazed at this double vision. They stared at Accau. They could not make up or down of him. Spring winds had burnt Anthony's blond skin to a fiery hue. His fair curls were tousled. Such a countenance in such a halo was too much for them. Light hair was something entirely new. Curls were ornaments

undreamed of. Although he bore hair enough for a dozen scalps they had no method for collecting it.

As they hesitated, a younger and wiser chief, Narrhetoba, commanded the observance of the calumet. There was a flurry of objections, but they obeyed. The bloodthirsty eyes were turned from the baffling scalps to the presents which the explorers were trying to show.

Anthony addressed them in one Algonquin dialect after another. Accau tried them in Iroquois and Huron. The friar thundered at them in Latin, French, Portuguese, and Dutch. All words were alike to them.

A howl went up. "Mi-am-hi! Mi-am-hi! Mi-am-hi!"

Anthony picked up a stick. "I'll draw a map on the sand and show them that I saw those Indians pass in the night far below here; the whole tribe is now scudding westward over the prairies out of reach."

The map was drawn. Its meaning was plain; its news was unwelcome.

A clamor of rage followed. The old men wept aloud.

Aquipaguetin in particular lamented loudly.

The white men guessed that this chief had lost a son in battle with the Miamis and that he was leading the Sioux in hope of revenge. So disappointed was he at the turn of events that

he shed grimy tears all over Père Louis' shaven crown.

"This old fellow carries his son's bones with him to keep his wrath in mind," the friar explained as well as he could above the hubbub. "If he can't get even with the Miamis he will take out his anger on the next people at hand—Frenchmen."

All the other chiefs began to wail.

"I think that we, too, are the same as dead," murmured Accau. "They mourn as they would over the slain," and his whiskers quivered with dread of torture and the stake. In hope of diverting the Indians he began to hand out presents to Anthony, who tossed them with much show to the friar, who in turn threw them among the chiefs, who groveled to them like Circe's swine. Half a dozen axes and twice that number of knives made a fine exhibit.

With the quick rolling eyes of men in deadly peril, the Frenchmen noticed that the Indians, in spite of gay paint and big feathers, were poorly set up. Their skin clothes were old, ragged, meager; their bodies more than half naked in the chill weather. Their jewelry was of shells, their embroideries of quills. Not one bit of iron showed, nor did they have beads.

How like glittering wealth the bright cutting edges of the traders' knives must look to them! By simple pantomime the friar told these

savages that many more white men with much more steel were coming to give presents to those who were friendly and to kill those who were not. Then he bent his neck with humility, bared it, and offering Narrhetoba one of the sharp axes, cried, "Dare you to cut off a white man's head?"

At that a hush fell on the group. Across the spring sunshine falling through the leaves came a sparrow's song. One long moment passed in hesitation.

Aquipaguetin longed to try a knife in just such use. But Narrhetoba, who held the ax, was of another generation. He had a commercial spirit. He saw a long line of white traders from whom he might gain more in barter than he could from these three by violence. He withheld his hand. By so doing he then and there split the warrior band into two sections—those whose motives were like Aquipaguetin's, robbery through murder; and those who, like Narrhetoba, preferred the safer and greater gain by exploitation.

Father Louis bellowed at them in his biggest pulpit voice. The still aisles of the forest began to resound with his words: "I am resolved to allow myself to be killed without resistance. Behold the example I set you! I come to convert the heathen."

Not one word could his listeners understand.

But Narrhetoba nodded his approval of this speech. He liked the spirit of the friar.

Accau began to take on hope for his skin and his goods. Anthony, who had been sweating in cold drops, shook himself warm again and unscrewed his drawn brows. "Perhaps I can placate Aquipaguetin, who is cross at missing his kill." And the boy raised his pistol. In the gaping sight of all he fired into a flock of wild turkeys which was whirling heavily across the open shore space near where the council stood. Two fell from the single shot.

The savages fell upon the game like roaches on a crumb. The feathered victims were pulled and torn apart. Indians who had never seen a gun examined the wonder of that shot. The birds' bones were broken as no arrow could do it. How desirable one of those iron "lightning sticks" would be for crippling an enemy!

Aquipaguetin seemed to be telling them that one gun in the hand was worth any number in the dim future. The braves at Narrhetoba's side snapped back that two guns would not go round. Wait for traders!

Narrhetoba, not looking quite as good a friend as his gestures said he was, soon brought their calumet back to them, made each take a puff, had one himself, and then gave it as a bitter pill to the defeated Aquipaguetin. "Peace among us," was what the smoking meant.

Immediately the canoes were shoved into the water. The explorers were jostled into them as rudely as they had been taken out. Prows were turned up-stream. Anthony took heart. As long as they moved in the direction his duty demanded he could make observations.

Father Louis stood up in the canoe as though he were pronouncing a benediction on those congregated round him and he gravely intoned these words, "I am not sorry to continue the business of making our discoveries in connection with these native inhabitants."

For nineteen of the long, long days of April they were hurried up the river at a furious pace. Peep o' day routed them from their slumbers on the ground. They were given a hasty bit of food and pushed into the canoes. Sometimes they stopped for dinner, sometimes not. Ceaselessly until dusk the paddling continued.

Four miles an hour up-stream! It was a frightful speed! All records for that generation were broken by the muscular Sioux. Ten hours a day! For twice ten days! Anthony grew stupid from the excessive toil. The friar was so jumbled in his note-taking that neither he nor his friends were able to understand some of his words. Poor Accau was worn out with the rough going. "I am always being waked up, yet I never have a chance to go to sleep," he grumbled.

The white men sank exhausted whenever they stopped on shore. But the young Indians, scrawny, sorry-looking specimens whose bodies seemed as despicable as their minds, danced vigorously around the camp-fire half the night singing the same verse of the same song over and over again. The old Indians sat up and applauded by continuous yells until the fires burnt out. Then they stood watch, turn about, until dawn. At sun-up they were wide awake and well started on another day.

Each night Aquipaguetin began a weeping harangue in favor of killing the Frenchmen, only to be out-talked and defrauded of his prey.

Thus through bad days and worse nights the upper Mississippi was first navigated. These three Frenchmen in constant jeopardy discovered and described it. No wonder they named a beautiful body of water they found Lake Pepin (lake of tears) in honor of that sobbing old rascal Aquipaguetin.

Suddenly one day they were set ashore, their canoe smashed, their goods divided among the savage crew, and they themselves herded for a cross-country run.

All that fatigue of rowing upon their arms was as nothing compared with the strain now put upon the white men's legs. Up hill—down dale—over streams—through woods—running—

climbing—swimming—they scurried at their best, driven by the tireless savages, who lighted the prairie grass at their heels for the fun of seeing them sprint. Lucky for them that their feet were shod with pluck!

Pell-mell into a native village they came at last. Howling squaws, squealing papooses, yapping dogs burst into chorus to greet them. They saw huts suggesting shelter, steaming pots suggesting food, and a row of tall stakes tied about with dried grass and piled with faggots—suggesting what?

The friar wondered how his name would look written among the martyrs. Accau's eyes followed the goods with which he had been trusted; he would need them no more. Anthony, viewing these preparations for the reception of any prisoners the war party brought, felt as hollow as a drum. "The frying-pan of captivity is better than the fire of those stakes," he thought.

The more frightened a Frenchman is the quicker his wits work, the more his gestures multiply, and the higher his courage rises. The boy stooped and picked up a bunch of feathers blowing near his feet. If he had not seen the feathers he would have taken something else, so short was the time for action and so dire the need.

Into the center of the circle made by the little

red blotches of the supper fires he stepped pompously. He thus came into full view of the big chief, Ouasicoude, of all the Sioux. Separating one lock from his curls he thrust a feather half-way into the coil. Apparently intent upon this odd toilet he arranged curl after curl, until the whole tribe, as curious as crows, were giving him their full attention.

Then he turned his irresistible smile toward Ouasicoude and gaily burst into laughter. Still laughing, he began to dance. He changed from laughing into singing—not the slow, mournful, coarse, and angular amusement of the Sioux, but a lively, tuneful jig of Picardy lads.

He was several years older than when he had sung to please the Père Marquette. His voice had settled to a golden barytone. It fell agreeably upon the ears of the most high executioner and he was seized with an idea which at some time or other has awakened in the breast of every king, "Why not have a minstrel at my court?" or, as Ouasicoude put it, "Why not keep loud medicine in my own tepee?"

That Anthony and his companions should live or die, that the trio should be saved to give their discoveries to the world, was nothing to him; that his royal self should be amused was everything.

From the pebble-filled gourd which Aquipaguetin had thrust as a rattle on each of the

doomed men, the boy shook out a mocking tune as he danced nearer and nearer to the stakes. At close range he drew his pistol and shot into the dried grass on one of them. As will often happen from such a charge the burning powder set the stuff on fire. It blazed up. Before the astounded savages it consumed itself. This was medicine tremendous! All forgot the original use of the stakes. They wanted this new style of bonfire, and Anthony set them off amid loud applause.

Ouasicoude loudly announced his intention to adopt the singer as his son. Narrhetoba, clever courtier, with an admiring glance at King Charles, immediately followed suit by taking Accau and the dog. Glinting maliciously, Aquipaguetin proclaimed himself the father of the friar, introducing the Franciscan to five squat squaws who were his new mothers because they were this chieftain's wives.

In a twinkling the three explorers became members of the nation. Ouasicoude and Anthony, Narrhetoba and Accau, Aquipaguetin and the Friar Louis are the six Sioux who made this region famous in its early days.

Now, the Sioux had a manitou. Greater than all other manitous it demanded much worship. To this deity, then, the Sioux fathers must present their adopted sons as an act of grace. When the Frenchmen were separated from the other

Indians and secretly led to the holy place they were prepared for some solemn form of initiation into the tribe.

The home of the manitou burst in wonder on their eyes. It was a splendid fall of laughing water. In the midst of primeval grandeur the cascade dropped in a peerless sheet of spray forty feet over a limestone ledge. No more beautiful spot for the residence of any manitou could be imagined. He was hidden behind this flashing torrent. He loved sacrifices. To please him the Sioux of all tribes threw many gifts into a deep basin made by a hollow in the rock.

Anthony was weary of captivity. So tiresome and degrading had his days among these savages become that he almost wished he could be lulled to sleep by the voice of the cataract, never to wake again.

But as the boy watched old Aquipaguetin grow more and more fervid in his devotions and saw him twitch his stone club with eager fingers and roll his eyes round and round in search of some living thing which would make a worthy sacrifice, life suddenly seemed very precious to Anthony. He determined that he should not become food for any manitou, no matter how great.

Aquipaguetin's ardor was spreading to the others. They caught his idea. What nobler

gifts had ever been given to the deity than these adopted sons would make?

Anthony's first thought for defense was, "I must change my father's point of view." The only remedy he knew for any savages' dangerous notion was to turn their minds to something more startling.

The friar kept a wary front toward his parent-foe; Accau edged close to Anthony; King Charles scented peril and, putting his tail between his legs, sneaked under the waterfall. The hint was unmistakable. Acting upon it, the boy, for his skin's sake, resolved to outwit superstition with superstition.

As Aquipaguetin came toward him with swinging club, the boy pulled his companions within the sacred arc of rainbow spray where no Indian dared follow lest the manitou become enraged.

Anthony then hunched himself into the fanatical pose of an inspired medicine-man. Because he was a capital mimic, as most singers are, his words rang out in the same raving tones their own magician might have used.

Ouasicoude and Narrhetoba paused thunderstruck. They thought the manitou had thrown his mantle of sorcery over these aliens. They fell on their faces and did obeisance to the waterfall. Aquipaguetin was not so sure of the divine nature of Anthony's deed, but he was

awed in spite of himself and lowered his club and bent his back, shedding tears of disappointment.

Who would profane a temple or destroy a shrine?

Certainly not Anthony, who had fled to it for sanctuary. The loveliness of the manitou's cascade and the power of its fall were as plain to him as to the savages. Why, then, should not the deity inspire him to prophecy as though he were a votary?

He had sacrificed himself to make the discovery of such useful natural features of the Great River as this waterfall might prove to be. Let it now reward him with a new lease on life that he might give his find to the Empire.

He thought of the brook in Picardy and of the wheels it set to going and he cried in ecstasy to this current of so much greater size:

"Some day, O laughing Water, white men shall put a harness upon you and drive you to work at turning a mill." His fancy set big factories up and down the shore. Yet his dream-workshops were not as hugh as the immense roller-mills which now stand in substantial piles, row upon row, where once his imagination builded.

"Over these fertile lands of your sky-blue lakes shall spring up the white man's wheat." It was easy for him to think of the Mississippi

shores dotted with farms; the valley conquered by the plow. But he could never have believed it if any one had told him of fields of a thousand acres each, of traction plows, of gasolene reapers, and of steam threshers; the inventions and triumphs of the agricultural Northwest.

"To you, O Miller-manitou, shall all the valleys bring their harvests as food to your grindstones." He imagined a line of French donkeys between panniers carrying wheat to the grinders. What *would* he have thought of a caterpillar truck and its trailers?

"Apprentices of genius shall teach you how to improve your hoppers and your stones." The Frenchman La Croix, an employee in the early mills along this site, proved to be, of all the clever workmen, the one who invented most of the superior processes which make these mills, where he studied, the models of the industrial world.

"Settlers shall crowd to your feet and towns rise around you."

He was thinking of the hamlets of Picardy or perhaps of something like the metropolis of Amiens. Of such a capital as St. Paul or a city like Minneapolis he had no idea.

"Old World gold shall be poured into your sacrificial basin."

One page of statistics showing the annual

income of the modern mills would have read to him, as it does to many others, like a page from the log of a Spanish treasure ship. Anthony exaggerated the power of the falls and the prosperity of the country to the limit of his imagination. That they would finally both be greater than his prophesy no sane man of his time would have dared to say.

His oration was having a fine effect upon the listening Indians. He could see that from the corner of his eye. He was sure they would not dare to harm him now. Although they might not understand his words, the all-knowing manitou could, of course, and that was enough for them. As he stepped out to join them his last words, impossible as they seemed, were of practical business worth and part of them are still official:

"Then, O idle manitou, when you are worn down and flattened by the toil of serving the race which tamed you, men shall forget your youthful beauty and your sacred title, a prosaic commercial nation shall know you only by that name with which I now take possession of you in the name of France—all persons here present as consenting witnesses. You, as a busy miller, shall be called for me and for my patron saint the Falls of St. Anthony!"

Whether the explorers had done a good day's work in discovering the wheat lands and the

water to develop them, let the farmers and the millers and the cities of Minnesota say.

Any one who noticed the gaily feathered foster-fathers and their equally decorated sons as they trotted homeward toward the tepees, outlined in every detail of feature and costume against the red northern sunset, single file, toeing in, stone clubs dangling, could be certain that a feast was in preparation and that he saw six satisfied Sioux.

IV

HUNTERS ALL

A Chase of the Buffalo Herds in the Prairie Tribes of Michael Accau —Flight of the Fur Traders

ONE little, two little, three little Indians, four little, five little, six little Indians, seven little, eight little, nine little Indians, ten little Indian boys sat in a bark tepee and yapped in chorus with King Charles as Father Louis, holding up his friar's gown, exercised his sandaled feet and bare shanks at a brisk pace up and down in front of them.

As he paused for breath, "Taketchiabihen?" he demanded, "Taketchiabihen?"

The little Indians and the dog shrilled again with the same crass sounds. Rubbing his ears when he had had enough of this word, the friar pulled out his note-book and jotted down some letters.

Anthony had chanced to see this performance as he came to the door flap. His eyebrows and dimples, his curls and teeth were a whole page

of question marks and exclamation points. Père Louis answered him as though he had spoken: "I am making a dictionary of the Sioux language. This is the word for *run*," and he showed the unspellable and unpronounceable yelp with which the children had answered his hiccoughing, "What is this?"

As the friar mopped his forehead Anthony's brows came down and his smile widened. "How did you manage to get them to help you?" he inquired.

Father Louis sighed as he explained: "When the mothers saw me use my razor they decided that the steel edge would shave the heads of the boys better than the sharp hot stones they had always used for that purpose. I am not allowed my dinner until I tonsure these fledgling braves all around their scalp-locks. In my turn I will not shave them until they tell me some new words. By reciprocity, then, does the dictionary grow. Some day I may be able to converse in the language of the Sioux. I can already understand something of what will be said to me by the gentleman yonder." He indicated a warped red thief who had put a pair of wretched legs through the armholes of the friar's elegant chasuble and was wearing it upside down. It was fastened comfortably in this position by a pair of suspenders made of the Franciscan cord.

Anthony was scandalized. But Father Louis had become resigned to slight mishaps like stolen clothes; too many worse things had happened in the three months of his captivity.

He led Anthony to another irregular hut, where the boy was placed side by side with the over-dressed person in the semi-religious style of suit. The friar was needed to baptize a sick papoose. The Père Louis' tolerance and sense of duty so affected Anthony that his awkward arms were very gentle. He was filled with pity and quite forgot the grotesque figure beside him in helping the tiny dying creature under his hands. He could not find it in his heart to object when the grateful friar named the child Antoinette in honor of her pale-face godfather.

Father Louis went promptly to the next business in hand, "Do you, Anthony, please keep the children out of mischief for a minute while I pack," he said. Anthony, half crying in sorrow for the expiring child and half laughing in disgust at the living ones, got his pocket compass. The magnetic needle was the one thing that scared the little Indians into decent behavior. Their fathers had told them it was a magic spirit which guided the white men over lands where no trails led. All the Sioux, large and small, quaked before its quivering point.

By its threat the meddlesome hands were warned away from the friar's sleeves whose

pocket cuffs were the only trunks he carried. He was going with Anthony to join a concourse of the Sioux hunters setting out in pursuit of buffalo.

News that the migrating herds were coming their way had set the Indians, now very short of food, into a frenzy of preparation. Away they all went in a bedlam, men and women, children and dogs, to the shores of the Great River, where they rioted in the camps by night and chased the buffalo on the outlying plains by day.

Every woman had her own pottery cooking-vessel. Savory stew was served at any hour in the twenty-four. Surplus meat was dried in the smoke of her smudges as she "jerked" it for future use.

Each child took part in this annual event. The tenth little Indian, the smallest hunter that ever stood in moccasins, had his own arrows and a buffalo calf for practice.

Pelts piled up like bales. Accau counted them by dozens.

If any one had told Anthony that in the beginning of the twentieth century a North American Indian of the Carlisle School would hold the world's record for all-around athletic prowess he certainly would have nodded that he believed it. "Day after day," he said, "the lithe Narrhetoba, with a single bow, set his

nimble feet to the sport of running down a buffalo and his deft hands to the game of slaying it by means of a stone-tipped arrow. That is more than I can do."

It was *too* easy for that active chieftain. He was bored with the old-fashioned exercise. He longed for the white man's steel and the new sensations to come in using a gun.

The friar and Anthony proposed to him, "Allow us to take a canoe and go down to the mouth of the Wisconsin in search of the traders the Sieur La Salle had promised to send after us." Both Narrhetoba and Ouasicoude agreed to do this. So Anthony and Père Louis slipped quietly away.

Accau stayed as hostage. He had a faint hope of retrieving some of his goods in the possession of these people, or, what was better, to get in place of his trinkets a cargo of buffalo-skins. His business eye saw the pelts growing in value during the hunt. Even the littlest Indian's calf-skin would be worth money *if* he caught it. And the bereaved parent who had shed the chasuble but kept the handy Franciscan cord acquired a sumptuous collection which Accau coveted.

"The capitals of Europe are clamoring for pelts from the New World. The princes and nobility of civilization admire the soft skins with which savages adorned themselves," he repeated over and over.

"The fur trade of the colonies promised to make the mother country rich. Ever since those daring young adventurers, the Sieurs De Radisson and Groseilliers, plunged into the northwestern wilds in 1654 and at the end of two years came out again in spectacular parade with three hundred Algonquins and sixty canoes, bringing forty thousand dollars' worth of pelts, all fortune-hunters had been eager to do something of the same kind."

Those first successful Frenchmen arranged a business alliance with some Englishmen and became the promoters of the Hudson Bay Company, which had immense influence in the early times and which to-day still buys furs of the Indians and sells them in the courts of kings.

Other companies were organized and the industry thrived. St. Louis on the Mississippi finally came to be the center of a fur trade carrying on one of those big businesses which are the pride of the United States.

Private speculators went into the trade with zest. Almost any person who had capital enough to buy a canoe, arm and munitions, supplies, cutlery and beads, would outfit a *coureur de bois* and encourage him to try his luck.

Almost half of these *voyageurs* perished in the wilderness. Romance, adventure, freedom, li-

cense, and wealth were the bait to lure them. Panthers, Indians ,snakes, malaria, and rapids were the traps that caught them.

Accau liked the trader's life and as long as he could stay by the fruits of this Sioux hunt he meant to do so. His employer, the Sieur La Salle, expected the buffalo herds to pay the expenses of settling and developing the valley of the Great River. Accau kept near the front of the chase, and because they were without definite plans it was not hard to lead the Sioux with more and more rapidity down the banks of the river in the direction the friar and Anthony had taken and toward the spot where the traders might appear.

A pageant now took possession of the upper Mississippi. As it passed the hidden creatures of the wild watched with bright, frightened eyes the enemies who were to affect so powerfully all those species in furry clothes.

First came Father Louis Hennepin and Anthony Auguelle, the Picard du Gay. They held the key to the northwest regions. Maps and observations, a new language and the right of discovery were all theirs.

Next, close on their trail, silently and secretly, sneaked old Aquipaguetin and ten of his warriors. They had the nine points which possession gives. They would not let any prisoners escape, no matter how reasonable their excuses might

sound. No strangers should get away to tell the white race the secrets of the Sioux.

Far out of sight behind the warriors the hunting party, lured by King Charles's antics and Accau's purpose, straggled along the shore. A fortune in pelts was carelessly dragging in their untidy baggage.

Last of all there came swiftly down the stream a third canoe. Its appearance was one of those accidents which change the course of large events. In it were two Indian guides, a French gentleman and four of his followers.

The gentleman was the Sieur DuLuth. He was an agent for one of the Canadian fur companies and had been spending a year in the neighborhood of the west end of Lake Superior. He had planted the French arms in the waters where the first tributaries of the Mississippi rise and had claimed much new soil and found many haunts of small fur-bearing animals.

He was now roving south by way of the St. Croix River. It emptied into a magnificent stream, which he guessed must be the fabled Father of Waters. He stopped there to gossip with the squaws he saw. They told him that on this Great River some white men, prisoners of the Sioux, were only two days distant.

Sieur DuLuth knew the uncertain temper of the Sioux. Indeed it has never changed. There are old men now living on the shore where the

Sieur DuLuth stood who can tell of their own youthful part in the Sioux wars of the 1860's when the Minnesota tribes behaved very much as Anthony saw them do.

"We must go to the rescue of these white men," the Sieur DuLuth had promptly decided, "and join forces with them. Together we will be able to interest the Indians in trading and so persuade them to make treaties."

In the mean time, Anthony and the friar were in doleful plight. They had no stores. Ten charges of powder were their only ammunition. They planned to keep it for self-defense. Instead of shooting game, they snared fish, captured turtles, chased woodchuck. Hunger was a constant companion. Wild fruits, of unknown species, made them ill. The hope of meeting the traders buoyed them. They bore each hardship as though it had been a blessing and went bravely on.

Little thinking that some one was all this time steadily following his course, coming nearer and nearer, Anthony seldom looked back.

One day he glanced up from the cooking of a scanty dinner. Peering at him over the edge of the bank were the eyes of an Indian. At least he thought it was an Indian, but when he went to look he found nothing.

At supper-time, farther down the stream, he had the uncanny feeling of being watched. He

advanced slowly toward the brink. The dismay in his face was reflected by the friar, for Aquipaguetin rose up and confronted them. He should have been hundreds of miles away. Every little hair on Anthony's body stirred separately as he wondered how long that revengeful savage had been within club-throwing distance.

With a single gesture the chief bade them stand still. A stone club and evil scowl emphasized his meaning. A painted warrior came over the river's bank and stood beside him. The warrior wore a tremendous bonnet. It stuck gay feathers aloft and dangled them all the way to the ground. Beads by the dozen, from Accau's precious stores, made him twinkle like a jeweler's window. He was fully armed. Another in similar garb came and joined the two; then another and another.

The explorers had no inkling of what these Indians meant to do. It was hard for Anthony to keep a cool and indifferent attitude until ten savages in gorgeous array had slowly appeared and formed themselves into a background for Aquipaguetin.

They were dressed for some special occasion. Indians are masters of the language of signs. The old chief, by a few pointings here and there and a motion or two, gave them to understand that he was on his way down the river to the mouth of the Wisconsin.

"Are you on your way to meet the traders?" asked the friar in a sentence which he thought excellent Sioux.

Aquipaguetin was.

"You wily old strategist!" cried Anthony. "If the traders come you want to get first choice of their goods. If they don't come you will be ahead of us on the river to cut off our escape: How I hate you!"

All the warriors nodded solemnly at Anthony. What a pity they didn't understand his language!

They circled around to show the white men how many and strong they were. The chief repeated his command for the Frenchmen not to follow him and hurried away. All the warriors trailed after him.

Anthony and the friar went at breakneck speed in the opposite direction to protect themselves by again joining the hunting party. How utterly downcast they would have been could they have known that the Sieur La Salle's traders would never keep the tryst on which all the captives' thoughts were fixed.

For that fort had come to extremity. No sooner had the commandant gone for food and munitions to sustain them than the dozen knaves in the stockade, who outnumbered the honest men, had mutinied. They burned the fort, stole all the valuables they could carry. Everything else they threw into the river.

The peaceful Indians camped round about the fort had been massacred by warlike tribes and their hamlets burned. Desolation reigned.

Where now the beautiful American city of Peoria stands, there were only ashes, bones, and the memory of the ill-starred Fort Crevecœur.

Accau became alarmed when he found out that Aquipaguetin had also gone down the river. He led the hunting party more rapidly in that direction and constantly watched for his friends.

Great was his relief to see them returning. But when he could discover no traders with them he was filled with foreboding.

As Anthony and the friar paddled up to the camp it looked like home to them. The summer sky, the sweet west wind, the billowing plain, the bronze hunters, the odor of the squaws' cooking-pots, the voices of children were all sources of delight.

At their approach the cheerful racket died down; the tribe stood still; all interest focused in one question. "Where are the traders?" The friar shook his head; an ominous silence followed. King Charles ran forward barking welcome. No one else was glad to see them.

Anthony begged: "We are hungry. Give us food."

"Where are the traders?" came the sullen chorus.

"We did not find them," was Père Louis' apology.

Narrhetoba's brow grew dark. Ouasicoude's silence was appalling.

At this unhappy moment who should whirl round a bend in full sight of the hunters but the Nemesis, Aquipaguetin!

In the few days that it had taken Anthony and the friar to reach the camp, the old chief, taxing to the utmost those famous paddle muscles of his warriors, had gone down to the mouth of the Wisconsin, found no traders, turned himself about and came back again at double speed in rage supreme.

He leaped ashore. The armed force of his warriors filed in fierce array on his heels.

"White men are liars!" he thundered. "There are no traders!"

The warriors, with long groans, burst into tears.

The hunters caught up their weapons. They rushed at the Frenchmen. Squaws stirred their fires—something more interesting than food was promised for a roasting. The ten little Indians hopped up and down with joy at the prospect of savage sport.

The story of the northern Mississippi, all the hard-won knowledge of its course, might have been blotted out then and there. Three lives could have vanished in faggot smoke and left no trace.

But the Sieur DuLuth was energetic with his paddles also. The Sioux too often meant mischief. The Frenchmen might need him. White men who met Sioux generally *did* require help.

In the midst of the powwow—for Indians can seldom do anything without a powwow—the third canoe appeared upon the river.

How like guardian angels the weather-beaten faces of the new-comers looked to the doomed men; how much sweeter than any music was the Sieur DuLuth's shout: "We are traders! Friends to the red men and friends to the white!"

The camp exploded with glee. Everybody, even Aquipaguetin, scrambled to the water's edge. DuLuth and his men were pulled ashore and embraced ecstatically. Greedy eyes feasted on his bulging stores. How they loved him! What affection they had for all white men!

They underwent violent reaction. "Get out the peace-pipes," was one command. "Bring on a feast," was another.

To the savages gloating over the prospect of bartering their buffalo-skins for weapons and trinkets it was an unimportant detail that these two parties of Frenchmen to whom New France looked for the establishment of a vast business should be meeting for the first time.

Traders had been promised; traders had come; that was enough for them.

All the little Indians and a hundred big ones hastened to show their gratitude. Friendship between the two races was established straightway. Ouasicoude uttered the ultimatum of the Sioux: "The Frenchmen are welcome to all the fur they can carry. We will give them much food. They may go when they please and where they like. They are free!"

V

MANY MOUTHS

Shooting Big Game for the Servants of the King under Robert Cavelier de La Salle—Fit Gifts for a King.

"EGGS!" cried Anthony, "Eggs!" He licked his lips. "I have not tasted an egg for a long time," and he smiled his gayest at an Indian who was carrying in both hands a dish hastily made from a palmetto leaf.

The savage was proud of his find and a little more excited than even fresh eggs seemed to warrant. But then he was a southern Indian and they are always more emotional than northern ones. He was a present from some Indian village lately visited by this party of the Sieur La Salle's with whom Anthony was now exploring and he may have wanted to call attention to himself as a useful and important person.

"They look rather queer," Anthony touched them with an inquiring finger; "some sort of wild hen may have laid them. They look something like turtle eggs."

"No. Not turtle," the Indian was sure of that. He stated their name positively.

Anthony had never heard the word. He called an interpreter. That worthy could pronounce the word which was new to him also. He could explain at second hand that it meant a creature living sometimes on land and sometimes in the water, very large and dangerous.

"Oh, nonsense," laughed Anthony, "it would not take a very big bird to lay those eggs. You should see a really large one like an ostrich. Go bring another Indian, for I'm sure we do not understand each other." He put the dish down in the sand near the camp-fire as he waited. Sometimes it was necessary to hunt an interpreter to interpret the interpreters.

It was nearly dinner-time and the whole of the Sieur La Salle's train, two dozen Frenchmen, a dozen and a half of Indians, ten squaws and three papooses and a guide or so hurried up to stare hungrily at the palmetto leaf, while the owner of this treasure trove, in a frenzy of words, tried to tell them that a fierce manitou as big as a man and wicked enough to bite a boat in two had laid those eggs. They must not be eaten.

This was unwelcome news to the cook, to whom the beautiful southern reaches of the Great River were not yielding as much foodstuff as she needed for her table.

Sieur La Salle had a cool, scientific interest in every form of life. He listened carefully to the Indian because he wanted to learn all he could of real and fancied fauna.

Henry Tonty, a captain and the Sieur La Salle's most devoted aide, was second in command. He watched with much amusement. Fantastic notions such as Indians delight in often caught his ready sympathy.

And the priest of the expedition, Father Membre, felt it his duty to keep his ears open when a heathen manitou was mentioned.

From the leader down to the tiniest papoose anything that had to do with meals claimed full attention.

How long the talk might have lasted it would be hard to tell had not Mother Nature herself chosen this moment to hatch those eggs. Warm sand and sunshine and fire were her helpers. This was what the Indian wished. He was more than satisfied at the astonishment of the northerners when there emerged, not fledglings, but squirming lizards.

"El-lagarto!" cried Tonty in Spanish. "Ha! They are crocodiles. Destroy them."

The Father laughed with contempt, "We need not be afraid of such tiny crocodiles, nor of the manitou they breed."

As Anthony recoiled from the wriggling mites he knew by the stirring of his curls that the

Indian might be justified in his dread of the manitou.

The Sieur La Salle gave the Indian a special present for the timeliness of his warning and issued the command, "No swimming in the bayous, no jumping from boats to floating logs, no paddle hands trailing in the water."

Anthony was filled with creeping nerves. He could not eat the ration doled out to him at the dinner, which did *not* include eggs. He shook and shook, partly with the chill which precedes the fever of malaria and partly with the shiver the reptiles gave him.

But he was normal again when the full moon came shining through the moss-draped branches of the live-oaks. The odor of jessamine, the song of the mocking-bird, the silver water rolling past, the easy bed of shore grass, the vespers of the peeper frogs, the altar candles of the fire-flies, all combined to make him love the south-land and to wonder why Canadians stayed in ice-bound Canada when France could give them homes in such balmy lands as this.

The Sieur La Salle, who was leading them down the river, was young, handsome, educated, titled, and rich. Honors and pleasures were at his hand if he lived in his native country; but he had one of those brave hearts which desired to sacrifice itself for France in the front trenches of the New World.

More than any other one discovery France felt that she needed to have a western water route to the trade of the Orient mapped out. Sieur La Salle had undertaken to find some northwest passage through this new American continent which barred the way. The king gave him a seigniory on the Saint Lawrence River. It was named La Chine to remind him of his ambition to achieve a short cut to China. He explored far and near.

He finally decided from what he heard through the Indians that a man in a canoe, with a few portages, could go from one side of the continent to the other by water. Starting at the mouth of the Saint Lawrence on the Atlantic, sailing through the Great Lakes, down any one of several tributaries to the Mississippi, then up the Missouri, then into the La Platte, from its headwaters to those of the Colorado, down to the Gulf of California, he could at last dip into the Pacific. That route is still open, but there had never been a deep waterway for ocean-going ships until the Panama Canal was begun by the French in 1880 and completed by the United States in 1914. So the Sieur La Salle hunted in vain.

When legends of the Mississippi began to reach him he hoped that the great sea into which it was said to empty might be the Pacific. The Sieur Joliet's voyage proved that it had some southern instead of a western outlet.

The Sieur Joliet's maps, the Père Marquette's diary, Friar Hennepin's descriptions, Accau's business reports, the Sieur DuLuth's estimate of fur-bearing animals, all combined to interest the Empire in developing the Great River valley. The Sieur La Salle received most of the help he asked for when he began to plan a French port at the mouth of the river which could be open to traffic all the year round and could afford an ocean carry for the products of the valley.

At Niagara he built a ship called the *Griffen*, the first to sail the Great Lakes, but it was lost before it could get into the ocean to go to the Mississippi's mouth. Another ship coming to him from France went down in the Saint Lawrence. These huge misfortunes forced him to abandon the idea of deep-water vessels for his first voyage on the Mississippi. He used the only things he could get—the same old birch-bark canoes which the natives had always had. They could not carry the profitable cargoes of the bigger ships, but they might serve to find a port.

In them, partly because they were fitted to the river and partly because they were manned by Indians who understood their navigation, the Sieur La Salle and his retinue were now making a happy voyage. They had come down by way of the Illinois River, offering friendship to the

hospitable Indian villages and scaring the hostile ones into allegiance by a fine show of state.

On this particular day they were far below the last point touched by the Sieur Joliet, and Anthony's gray eyes grew wider and wider as he viewed the semi-tropical scenes and marveled at the ever-broadening expanse of the river so truly great.

Soon they came to a place where the main stream divided into three. The party separated; several boats for each of the new currents would speed the journey's end. Sieur La Salle took the right-hand one. Perhaps he was hoping against hope for some western outlet.

When the fleet came together again it was upon salt water. Blue, sparkling, and invigorating, the water and the air of the Gulf of Mexico filled them with joy.

"Past this gulf the Spanish galleons go back to the Old World heavily laden with the gold of their new lands. From this port we can ship cargoes of furs almost as valuable as theirs. Nearly a century and a half ago the Spaniards saw this region, but they have never fortified nor possessed it," said the Sieur La Salle to his officers. "We will now take it under the protection of our Empire."

Jubilant over their luck, they began to prepare for a formal claim.

During the bustle an Indian signaled to

Anthony and he withdrew to let the savage whisper in his ear, "Do you remember the eggs?"

Anthony grimaced to show that he did.

"El-lagarto," repeated the Indian carefully. He liked the Spanish word. "I can show you one."

"I'm not sure I want to see one—but—yes—of course I do," and Anthony followed his guide.

On a little rise of muddy ground was a jumble of driftwood and grass. The Indian mounted it with Anthony at his heels. He peered over a log and, bobbing his head with assurance, pointed his finger and made way for his companion to see. Anthony stuck *his* head forward and almost into the open maw of the most horrid creature on earth—two immense jaws wide open—double rows of long white fangs—

He forgot that he was now grown up. He gave the shriek after shriek of a scared little boy and, flouncing backward, went tumbling down the knoll in a madness of haste.

The conference was stopped. All crowded round him in consternation. He was too shaken to be ashamed of himself. "What's the matter?" was the demand.

"El-lagarto," explained the Indian, charmed with this second sensation he had produced.

"Did you kill it, Tony?" asked the Sieur La Salle.

"No," confessed Anthony. "The instant I looked at it, it opened the biggest mouth ever seen and almost bit my head off."

"I will shoot it," and Tonty picked up his firearms; "we don't want one so near the camp."

"It has already been dead for a very long time," began the Indian; "I myself tied its mouth open with a thong—"

As this fact brought the laughter of his peers, Anthony flew into a rage and plunged at the Indian with both fists clenched. Nothing would have pleased the rank and file of soldiers nor the savage boatmen better than a fight in the ring they formed. But the officers pulled Anthony off the prostrate, bewildered Indian, who could not understand the pain of du Gay's wounded vanity.

The poor savage seriously explained to all the interested circle: "When the dead el-lagartoes are quite—quite—*ripe*—it is the custom of my people to pluck out the elegant teeth and to make ourselves necklaces. Why should the white man be so noisy about that?"

Why indeed?

Anthony had so exhausted his emotions that he was very quiet and only half appreciative as he held his place in the group who were ready for the ceremony of taking possession of a kingdom.

To represent the Church, the Father Membre

set up a cross and buried near it a lead plate bearing the arms of France. For the Empire the Sieur La Salle erected a column with the emblem of France in full view. These words were carved in the wood: "Louis Le Grand, Roy de France et de Narvarre, regne, la Neuvieme Avril 1682."

The Indians, in the brightest of feathers and the dullest of faces, formed a background for the Father Membre, who chanted the Te Deum. Anthony led the hymns. Then the Sieur La Salle in legal speech took possession of all the lands drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries from the Alleghanies in the east to the unknown mountains in the west, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf. The Frenchmen lined up in military formation and fired a salute to the king's new dominion. It was named Louisiana, for his Majesty.

Think how bold a spirit a man must have had to make such a claim; think what a magnificent present from a subject to his ruler; think of the changes which have happened in that vast domain!

For eighty years the rustic standard held Louisiana. During those days whenever a wandering missionary would meet a soldier of fortune in a native village they would join with some *coureur de bois* to start a trading post. Many dotted the valley. To civilize his new

country his Majesty sent over ship-loads of "king's maids," whom the priests married to the soldiers and *coureurs de bois*. Houses took the places of tepees, the tiny villages grew to towns, French habits of living and gentle ideals of courtesy colored midwestern life with a romance which has never faded.

Then the mother country, politically harassed, ceded Louisiana west of the Mississippi to Spain. In another three years the Highland Black Watch captured Fort Chartres and all Louisiana east of the Great River went to England. Old World emigrants, Scotch and Irish and what not, began pouring toward these lands to make themselves on the virgin soil into something that was not Spanish nor French nor English, but a new race called American. At the time of the Revolution they took Louisiana away from England by force of arms. The part owned by Spain had been ceded back to France, and that the Americans bought of Napoleon in 1803.

All the world, even kings, love a hero, and the Sieur La Salle, standing at the mouth of the Mississippi in 1682, felt sure that in time Louis XIV would reward him for adding this valley to the Empire, as indeed he did, not with honors and titles, for which the explorer cared nothing, but with more men and ships to develop the resources of the Great River.

But even in the midst of the glory of claiming such a kingdom, the little group of adventurers complained of the heat and the miasma. Anthony growled softly: "I do wish that explorers might go north in summer and south in winter like the birds and buffalo. Last winter we were frost-bitten in the ice. Now we are sweltering at the outlet in the time of year when the sources of the river are pleasant."

"This hot, swampy land is breeding fever among us. We cannot find fruits to allay it nor any wholesome meat to counteract it as we did further up the stream," said Tonty. "We must pay for our discoveries in physical discomfort."

"In a word," declared the Sieur La Salle, "we are, as you all know, on the verge of starvation. I have resolved of necessity to eat the only game this region affords. Anthony, is your pistol ready?" and he motioned to the Indian who longed for a necklace. "Then follow this man."

Poor Anthony, rebellion in his long-drawn face and repugnance in every line of his figure, moved behind his guide along a half-submerged path. Soon they came to a pile of rotted tree-trunks. Among them the Indian pointed out the quarry, which would have been quite invisible to unaccustomed eyes.

Swallowing a shudder and adjusting his pistol, Anthony determined to blot out his former

cowardice. So intent was he that he forgot the command about innocent-looking logs. He stepped upon one to get a better aim at the reptile. His foot-rest slipped, a flail hit him with so much force that he might have been driven straight into the opening jaws of the living log had not the wary Indian grabbed his jerkin even as he touched the snare and yanked him away at right angles, one hand clutching the air, the other tight on the pistol.

The sweep of the beast's tail was quicker than the eye could follow, but its body was so clumsily built that it needed several seconds to turn. In that flash of time Anthony's pride rose above fear and horror, and as the brute, after missing its kill, was sinking itself into the ooze he aimed at one of the wicked little eyes and banged away.

The first seen reptile had vanished as completely as though it had never existed. Anthony's shot was fatal to the second one.

The Indian guide's whoop of triumph brought others to help haul out the game and prepare it for roasting. The ravenous crowd shouted for glee. This stuff could be chewed and swallowed, and therefore it was food.

Then Anthony, having found himself, went back to his superior officer whistling with restored self-confidence. He knew that many more such distasteful meals would have to be provided ere they worked their way up from the

swamp lands and out of starvation into the productive regions and into touch with the world.

"Sieur La Salle," he said, "if in the pursuit of your duty to France you have come to such a pass that you must eat diabolical game, I can shoot it. Behold in me, at your service, chief high executioner to his Satanic Majesty the El-lagarto!"

VI

ON THE ROCK

Holding the Only Fortress of the Valley against the Iroquois for Henry Tonty—An Owl Saves a Nation

ANTHONY frowned at the capable back of Henry Tonty as it mounted the steep trail in front of him. He wished that he dared to sigh aloud to call this energetic man's attention to the fact that helpers sometimes wearied and that this was one of the times.

For Anthony hated work. Common useful labor tired him. "Let the Indians do it," he thought. The Indians passed the idea on, "Let the squaws do it."

But the squaws were already over-busy curing furs and getting ready to put in the spring crops. So Tonty had decreed that Frenchmen and Indians alike should lend a hand at strengthening the fort on top of the Rock of the Illinois. It had been hastily built in the autumn and now needed the finishing touches.

Every Frenchman wanted to be a military

officer or a wandering *coureur de bois*. Each Indian preferred the life of a hunter or a warrior. Yet here they were all working busily under a commander who said that they must dig ditches or fell trees for the mammoth stockade.

Now Tonty had an artificial iron hand to take the place of one he had lost in battle. He was clever, almost uncanny, in the use of it. The bad Indians whom he slapped with it and the good Indians whom he directed by its metal point regarded it equally with fearsome rolling eyes as very big medicine.

Tonty had also an iron will. Every Frenchman felt it. Few could go against it. His mandates were obeyed; the fort improved.

The Rock was a fine spot for such a defense. It rose out of a plain high above all other landmarks. Over a hundred feet up in the air its almost flat top spread out in an acre of ground with a running spring hidden in its shrubbery. On the north the Illinois River flowed past its base. Three sides dropped sheer to the plain. The fourth had a difficult almost perpendicular path.

A few men could hold it against many.

Ever since the destruction of Crevecœur the Sieur La Salle had wanted to set a fort upon the Mississippi midway between north and south to be the center of the fur trade. He had found here on the tributary Illinois a natural fortress

easily defended and already surrounded by loyal Indian towns. Upon his return from the mouth of the Mississippi he had built the stockade. For the present he would make it answer for his central headquarters. It was christened Fort Saint Louis.

The crisp spring air was ideal for industry and Tonty was determined to get the buildings in perfect order. To do this it was necessary to bring various materials from the plain. The end in view was good. Anthony knew that; but he decided as his gang of workmen reached the heights, threw down their loads and panted for breath, that they had done enough for the present.

He winked at a really handsome young Indian standing near him and knew by a single exchange of glances that this fellow was of the same opinion. He had loved the savage and had coaxed him into fagging for his white brother ever since the day of their first meeting in the fall. For Anthony was apt to give his light-hearted affections to any chum who promised to be full of fun.

As Tonty stood ready with his next order he faced Anthony's way. That naughty Frenchman with his team-mate beside him paused abruptly in the act of mopping his brow and fixed his eyes, popping with amazement, on a tree near him where hopped two robins. All the Indians

round about followed his stare and watched the robins. Even busy Tonty looked. One bird chirped at the workers; the other bird turned his head on one side and said to the first bird in perfectly good Illinois dialect, with a thin little trilling robin voice, "Squaws work."

The Indians stood petrified. Tonty, ill-pleased at the interruption, waved his hand impatiently and the robin said again, "Squaws work." That magic hand! Every Indian saw it make the bird talk. What would it do next? With an impulse for safety they turned as one man and went scrambling, sliding and falling to the bottom of the hill.

Tonty was provoked. "Oh, Tony, that was such an untimely thing for you to do when I need the workers. Such an old, old trick, too—so childish!"

"It is all the better for being ancient and simple if it succeeds," grinned the unrepentant Anthony; "and besides, *I* did not do it. I couldn't. It is much harder than singing a tune."

"Didn't the sounds come through those crooked teeth of yours?"

Anthony shook his head and crossed his heart. His chum stood innocently aloof. "Give us an hour, dear Tonty, to rest our muscles in a ball game. At your signal I will bring them all here again to work at double speed," and away he ran to play.

Tonty, heavy with care, went to the Sieur La Salle with the list of his needs. The fort was nearly repaired. Quantities of stores, enough for a siege, were arriving on the backs of squaws every hour in the day. Bales and bales of furs by the same pack beasts were also coming up.

As the two leaders stood side by side and gazed down on the lovely fertile plain, the happy towns and the rollicking ball game, they talked of how best to hold the Great River valley from this vantage point. A town of some six thousand Illinois lay just across the river. In another direction, also within reach of the refuge of the fort, was a village of Miamis almost as large. Of Shawnees, Weas, and half a dozen others in much smaller tribes there were enough to make perhaps some twenty thousand souls.

These were allies. Also they were dependents. They expected the Sieur La Salle to give them French goods in exchange for furs and to help provide them with food if their crops failed. First of all, his soldiers and his steel weapons must protect them from their ferocious enemies, the Iroquois.

He had claimed all this land with their consent. In return he must save their constantly threatened lives. Until he could get a line of ships coming through the Gulf to his new-found port, Fort Saint Louis must be supplied from Canada by that route through the Great Lakes

which he had struggled over back and forth in so many heartbreaking journeys of winter hardships.

On the Atlantic seaboard English towns were rooting themselves through settlers who owned and cultivated their homesteads and meant to keep them forever. Along the Pacific coast Spanish priests drilling the heathen into civilized farmers owned the gardens where the adobe missions were building, and stood ready to defend them. In the Mississippi Valley between the two the little Rock of the Illinois, a pinpoint on the map, a speck on the horizon, by the right of its twenty armed Frenchmen held the whole vast region of the Great River for France.

And the twenty Frenchmen, every one as careless, gay, and irresponsible as Anthony, were playing ball while Fort Saint Louis stood empty and neglected.

Tonty was justified in his anxiety as he listened to the Sieur La Salle say: "The present governor of Canada is not like our former friend, Frontenac. This commandant is an old man and a greedy politician from Paris. He knows nothing of Indian warfare and does not see the importance of this post. He will not send the men we need to defend these towns nor will he give us the munitions and goods that we have paid for in the furs already forwarded to him."

"There are less than a hundred pounds of powder—" interrupted Tonty, "and the Iroquois are threatening even now—"

"Look!" cried La Salle, "look! Something has happened among the ball players."

The dots of Indians, far below, had massed in a crowd at the center of their field and as suddenly separated again with shrill wails, each player going at swiftest pace in a different direction.

"Bad news! Prepare yourself for a deluge. As fast as the warning spreads they will come here by villages. Put a good face on it," and the nobleman made ready to receive his tenants. He was their overlord; and he was at his best when dangers assailed him. His whole life was spent in defying one tragedy after another. "There are stores enough to feed them for several days—"

"When the powder gives out we can use bows and arrows, stones and logs—"

The bearer of evil tidings had fallen exhausted at the base of the Rock. Anthony was the first to come over the rim with the one word message, "Iroquois."

Within the memory of these Illinois their valley had been conquered by the unspeakable Iroquois, the Huns of this continent. Towns had been destroyed, men killed, women tortured, children scalped, prisoners burned. Then they

had had no refuge. Now they flew to Sieur La Salle and the Fort Saint Louis.

To the Rock they came pouring in such a horde as only fear can drive, red bodies striving—contorted—palpitating—feathers awry—clothes discarded—paint running in sweating streams. Hundreds of galloping moccasined feet pounded out such a series of steps up that steep trail as shovels could not have done in a whole season.

Sieur La Salle met them. His proud, domineering face showed that he had no fear of anything. Tonty's sensitive Italian lips, quivering with responsive excitement, answered their wild demands for the protective medicine of his magic hand with all sorts of impossible promises.

As one means of restoring quiet, the missionary Father prayed as loud as his big outdoor voice could shout. And Anthony attended by his faithful shadow went about among them with that quirk of a smile they all liked. His words were happily calm. He was a much better worker in a panic than he was in a ditching gang. Together they reminded the quaking ones that any man who could make a bird speak could surely save them from the Iroquois. And who had not already heard of that talking bird of a few hours ago?

A red sunset, a yellow rising moon has seldom looked upon a spot more filled with human stress.

The very air above the plateau quivered with hurried breath as though a furnace stirred it. Every hour of that awful night added to the number climbing the stair. At dawn they were still coming. Peeping over the stockade and from perilous overhanging lookouts they watched the plain. Without rest, without sleep, they surged back and forth, quelled to a semblance of sanity by the white men.

Peep o' dawn, a rising sun, a day of light showed a deserted vale. No Iroquois! Their enemies had passed on some other trail. This was the power of the iron hand. Let all evil-doers beware!

The Illinois pledged fealty afresh to the commander who had for his servant such a captain as Tonty. They scurried back to their homes.

This event had made the Illinois as stable as an Indian settlement can ever be. It was not a town such as La Salle wanted, but it answered his purpose. In his enthusiasm for the extension of France he saw so far into the future that some of the things he planned could not be carried out for a long, long time.

It was not until the year 1764 that his central city for the Mississippi was founded and given the name of his choice, Saint Louis. *Coureurs de bois* began it. Indians were treated justly there. Noble Pontiac, pathetic in his defeated old age, was given a home within its stockade

gates. A tablet to his memory hangs now in one of its finest buildings.

La Fayette was one of the city's guests. Thomas Benton, a statesman, lived there. From its trade depots the canvas-topped argosies were fitted out for the gold-fields of the forties. It fought buccaneers, land-grabbers, cholera, cyclones, floods, and renegades, and in each trial came out victorious.

Spain at one time, England at another, tried to hold it without success. But when it became American, it remained American. The French choice of location gave it commercial success. Father Membre's shaven crown would go high in pride could he see the churches, schools, and hospitals it has to-day. Its parks, boulevards, and buildings would delight Tonty's Parisian taste.

It was this vision of their Saint Louis to come that held these men to the dangerous Rock.

Sieur La Salle knew that the peace of the valley might be broken at any time. Men and munitions he must have. He left Tonty in command and started again over the trail to Montreal to get by personal demands the supplies that otherwise would not be given him.

In the false security which so often deceives the unprepared, the villages went through the summer and into the fall under the fort in which they had such superstitious faith.

Then again came the cry of, "Wolf, wolf!" Again the panic; again the crowded Rock; again the night of horror. No magic availed. The day revealed the Iroquois pack surrounding the hill. They sat on their haunches and yelped as though they had come to stay. All day, all night, the next day, the next night, three, four, five days and nights they besieged the Illinois.

They did not attack. The one narrow cannon-swept path would rake off their warriors as they climbed in single file. They meant to let the Illinois make the next move in this dreadful game.

"If they find out how low our powder is—" began Tonty. He would not mention even to himself the possibility of such a thing as actually happened many years afterward on this very Rock when a warrior tribe of Illinois was besieged by Pottawottomies and perished so miserably that the place has ever since been called Starvation Rock.

The Father confessor of the flock was thinking of another danger. "If the smallpox should break out here—"

Anthony laid a friendly hand on Tonty's arm. "Once you saved the Illinois because you were brave enough to go into their camp alone."

Tonty shook his head. "No, it was because I did *not* wear ear-rings!"

"It is my turn now to do what I can," and Anthony took his chum by the hand. "Open the gates for us," he demanded.

When the guarded gates swung apart the two crept through and disappeared down the incline toward the twinkling Iroquois camp.

Little owls—the forest was always full of them—hooted now here and now there, calling back and forth in wavering minor notes. Tonty's ear could not tell the difference between an owl's voice and a white man's imitation of it, but any Indian could easily do so. The Illinois whom Tonty asked to listen to the sounds was sure that part were made by Anthony, but neither he nor any one else could say whether birds or Anthony's companion made the rest.

These two mimics, half in joy over the adventure and half in fear of its outcome, slipped nearer and nearer to the hostile camp. They peeped at one place and then another to find the best spot in which to let the Iroquois capture them.

At last they saw a tiny fire where sentinels were putting their weapons in order. And in the shadow, quite like a page of a child's picture-book, sat four little owls all a-row on a limb. It was the stage setting that they wanted for their vaudeville act. Whether it should turn out a comedy or a tragedy the endangered Illinois nation would soon be able to tell.

A delicate, indefinite "oo - oo - oo -" did not attract special notice from the sentinels. But when Anthony's heavier voice and very human "hoo - oot" sounded close to them they jumped to attention, pounced upon the pair and jerked them into the firelight for inspection as though they had been a couple of rag dolls. In any surprising event there is always a half-minute when even the most active will pause to decide upon the next movement. A few seconds' inspection of their captives were necessary before the sentinels would raise the alarm, "White man!"

On some such brief interval Anthony had built his plans. He pointed at the owls and gazed open-mouthed and intent. It is a trick that never fails. All the sentinels followed his glance. Not one of them looked at the lips of the Illinois Indian standing beside Anthony. One of the little owls blinking in the firelight shifted his feet, opened his beak and whined in Iroquois, "Answer me—answer me."

Anthony reproachfully declared in the same language, "I *did* answer you; I *did*." Indeed every Iroquois had heard the boyish hoot.

One of the sentinels threw himself on the ground and rolled out of sight into the dark. His personal safety was his one instinct. Another ran to the chief speechless with alarm. But a third, who was not possessed of an ex-

citable temperament, clutched his prisoners with fingers like steel and bade a paralyzed Iroquois bind their wrists.

Thus they were escorted toward a whooping band who were already running to meet them. They were roughly handled, their clothes torn, their faces scratched.

Yet the story of the owl as it traveled had its effect in putting the two prisoners in a different class from the handful of Illinois captives who were already bound both hands and feet. Anthony in particular they examined with a dreadfully intimate curiosity, sticking their fingers in his mouth to try the edges of his four unusual teeth and picking at his ears. If he had had a beard—but no, his chin and lips were smooth! Had there been rings in his ears—not even holes were drilled in them! That is, had he been a whiskered, ear-ringed Spaniard they would have killed him then and there. But since he was so plainly French they hesitated as they had once done with Tonty, of whose magic fingers they were much afraid.

They had various treaties with the French which they sometimes kept and oftener broke. They never quite dared to murder a Frenchman offhand. They generally tortured him and let him go.

So Anthony as he was dumped into a brush heap by the chief's fire tried to tell his Illinois

chum that they were safe enough and their business in the enemies' camp successfully begun. If, as the night grew cold and his bonds cut painfully and his captors looked more and more like the red demons they were, his courage thinned and he shed a few tears of weariness and self-pity, no one knew it.

It was easy enough to be brave at midnight when all the warriors were still awake and baiting him, but his spirits were at low ebb in the hour before dawn.

"Perhaps the chief, after a week's unsuccessful siege, may also feel discouraged. This is the time to try him," thought Anthony as he gazed in every direction, but saw no owl to help him. The brighter eyes of his Illinois at his side showed him where to look and indicated that he was ready to help.

The long, shivering cry of the owl woke the jaded chieftain, and Anthony's echoing answer brought half a dozen chilled warriors to their feet.

Anthony was sitting up and shaking his head at the owl. The Illinois seemed to be asleep.

The owl said, "Answer me, answer me."

"Wait until the iron hand comes," replied Anthony with apparent secrecy in a very audible whisper, "then *he* will give bad medicine."

The owl laughed—yes—*laughed!*

Anthony hastily set his finger on his lips as a signal to the owl to be silent. The owl obeyed. Anthony *pretended* to *pretend* to go to sleep!

The dismayed chiefs laid their ruffled feathers together. They did not like the prospect of a visit from Tonty, who had more than once puzzled and defeated them. His bad medicine was bitter to their taste.

Without stopping to call a powwow they summoned all hands to arms. They released the Illinois prisoners and drove them out of camp. They roused Anthony and his chum and bade them leave.

"But we don't want to go," protested Anthony. "We like to wait with you."

The listening chiefs were overwrought. They dared not kill him, nor keep him, nor send him back. They set some sentries over him, not to prevent his escape, but to hold him so that he could not follow them! For they were now bent on running away before Tonty's hand should strike at them. Of armed force they were not afraid, but before black magic they fled in panic.

Break o' day saw them going over the horizon.

Night in a far-away camp found the Iroquois breathing more easily. The chief was still so nervous that a little owl above him disturbed him. To his horror Anthony's voice in a poor imitation of the bird's call came through the woods.

"Hoo - oo - oot!"

He clutched at his braves. They huddled round him. What an unwelcome sight was Anthony as he came toward their hiding-place!

"How has the magician escaped his guards? Why does he follow me?" The great dignitary gave way to his real feelings and with a howl of fear ran still farther through the forest. All his braves trailed hot-foot after him. Anthony trotted along in not too close pursuit.

On the morning of the seventh day Tonty looked down upon the deserted plain. The enemy had left in the night. He wrote in his journal, "The Iroquois retired discomfited."

Toward night the Illinois prisoners who had been released began to straggle into the fort. Some were badly singed; others full of nasty cuts; all were scared. They could not tell why the Iroquois had freed them.

It was not until evening of the tenth day that Anthony and the Illinois came back. They were ragged and tired. The Illinois was as solemn as any screech-owl could be, but Anthony was full of laughter.

When all the tribes crowded round the two to thank them for driving the besiegers away and rejoicing in their escape, he said in great glee: "We did not *escape*. They ran from *us!*"

VII

JOLLY ROGER

Guarding the Port of the Mississippi beside the Buccaneer Pilot, Lawrence de Graaf—A Queer Flag at the Mast

THE *Badine* was the name of a ship dancing over the Atlantic to her port at Santo Domingo of the West Indies. Behind her came her sister ship, the *Marine*, a small frigate. In their wake, wavering gull-like in the sunshine, sailed a couple of store vessels.

The commander of the fleet was the Sieur de Iberville, a Canadian, lately the hero of the battle of Hudson Bay. With the sweep and dash of some North Sea Viking, he had plunged with his ship, the *Pelican*, into the frost and fog of that Arctic harbor. He fell upon those ancient rivals of the French, the English traders, and took them by surprise. To their man-of-war he gave a slashing fight and sank it. Two consort ships were captured. Fort Nelson could not hold out against his impetuous onslaught. It was taken and renamed Fort Bourbon.

For this maritime conquest France hailed him as a brilliant genius. The court fêted and idolized him. The king gave him a patent, two hundred colonists, and supplies enough to found a colony at the mouth of the Great River.

The first fleet sent from the mother country to the sea entrance of the Mississippi had oversailed the estuary and had been wrecked upon the coast of Texas. The brave La Salle, leader of the expedition, had perished tragically while going back overland to search for what was called his "fatal river."

The Sieur de Iberville's fleet had crossed the ocean safely. The decks of the *Badine* and *Marine* were crowded with folks in their best array. Land had been sighted. They longed for a view of that New World which was to be their home.

One of the commander's retinue, an adventurer of France, Anthony Auguelle, the Picard du Gay, set his scarlet heels upon the boards where his buckles glittered finely. His hair was parted in the middle and hung in heavy curls on his shoulders. In those days he who had good hair wore it thus; he who had it not bought a wig and achieved the same effect. A plumed hat adorned the curls. This was the fashion of that Paris Anthony had so lately quitted for the Spanish Main. His velvet coat which concealed a shirt of mail, his laces and ruffles, his knee

breeches and sword were exactly as they should be. He was proud of himself.

Yet all of this elegance was forgotten when the lookout called: "A sail! A sail!"

The colonists strained their eyes on the horizon where one by one each gradually made out three low-lying craft of speed, sloops of ten guns each. They flew no flag. But when upon closer approach the pilot of the *Badine* hailed them with some cabalistic word, they set up such a shout as none of the listeners had ever heard. As they passed at quarters perilously close the dullest eye could see—all ready to raise as it lay at the foot of the mast in the foremost boat—the black flag of piracy!

On the *Badine* and the *Marine* and on both the other ships every gun was manned, every soldier stood in readiness. But the sloops gave them a cheer and a great laugh. Nothing else!

The officers looked to the Sieur de Iberville for explanation. He looked to his pilot. Now this pilot's name was Lawrence de Graaf and he was a buccaneer upon occasion. Every one on board knew that. But a ship must have a pilot, even though he be a person with a history. And a buccaneer is to a pirate as a tadpole to a frog. Until he is fully developed he is more interesting than repulsive. So de Graaf answered, quite simply, "They wait for bigger game."

After an uneasy interval of suspense and

guessing they found that he was right, for they saw a far-away dot which on coming nearer and nearer proved to be that most magnificent pageant of the coral seas, a Spanish galleon with all sail spread.

As this splendid treasure ship went past them on the wings of the trade wind the *Badine* shouted a warning to her, "Beware the sloops!"

The other ships from France repeated the hail, "Beware the sloops!" She dipped an ensign in a salute of thanks. How gallant she was!

"Shall we turn about and go to her assistance?" asked the Sieur de Bienville, younger brother to the commandant. This was his first sight of pirates, and he was as full of fight as a cockerel.

The Sieur de Iberville shook his head. "The sloops are Spanish, the galleon is Spanish, too; they might combine against us and amuse themselves by making us walk Spanish before they fought it out between them."

"Will there be pirates at the mouth of the Mississippi?" queried de Bienville, hopefully.

"If we begin a successful colony they will raid it. All good towns will be looted. You will have your fill of defending the weak in days to come. When you grow too strong to be robbed you can then buy of the sea-rovers all the stuff they have taken from some one else."

"And you won't stop now to interfere in

Spanish family quarrels?" asked Anthony in a tone filled with regret.

The Sieur de Iberville shook his head, and the fleet went on to anchor at Cape Haytien. At that place they met the *La Françoise*, a fifty-gun war-ship, sent to join them and to act as escort past the lanes of piracy.

By de Graaf's advice they stopped also at the island of Tortugas, where they could get a stock of meat much cheaper than at Santo Domingo. Cut prices were possible, for the men of Tortugas stole the cattle from the planters of Santo Domingo. They dried the meat by a process called buchanning. While fitting out any ship with meat these buchanners, or buccaneers, examined it to see whether it was armed or not and whether it was worth a chase.

The Sieur de Iberville's fleet was not afraid of them. From the superior height of the quarter-deck, and the elevated sense of clean mind, decent body, and elegant clothes, Anthony looked down upon the unkempt men who loaded the meat.

These fellows had rough hair braided into queues tied back with bandanas. Their chests and arms and feet were bare. Bright sashes bound round their rags held pistols of every size and shape. Wherever a knife could be stuck, behind ears, in pockets, up trousers legs, there it gleamed. When one of them carried a blade

between his teeth how reckless he looked! How any man could degrade himself to the level of one of these foul robbers Anthony could not imagine.

One yellow-fanged beef-handler had a scar across his mouth from some blow which had knocked out his lower front teeth. He was whistling through this handy opening a curiously wild and melodious air. Leaning over the rail, Anthony puckered his lips around the impish gap in his own handsome teeth and repeated the tune with an echo's mockery.

The man glanced up. If he had not fancied Anthony's look it was an even chance that he had gone black with hate and thrown a knife. Like most people at whom Anthony smiled he softened into friendliness. "Ha, comrade," he called, for the ship was moving out, "we will meet again. How do they call you?" His words were English.

Tickled at making the acquaintance of a buccaneer so easily, Anthony replied in French: "I am the Picard du Gay at your service. Thank you for the tune."

"Good-by, du Gay, good-by!"

"Good-by, brother, good-by," and Anthony laughed as he waved his hand.

All this looked like playing with fire to the Sieur de Bienville. He was young; much younger than Anthony now was. But Anthony still

looked so boyish and was so fresh at heart that the two had become cronies on the long voyage. With one mind they now fell to talking of the Gulf pirates. What could they do if their colony was attacked and the skull and cross-bones flaunted in their faces?

They were therefore much dismayed, upon reaching Pensacola, to find that they themselves were objects of suspicion. Their fleet was forbidden to enter the harbor. Pensacola was a Spanish colony. The officers of the port were polite but firm in their refusal. Behind them lay a Spanish war-ship even bigger than the *La Françoise*. The French fleet moved on.

De Bienville fumed, "They treat us as though we were robbers." But after he had followed de Graaf's significant look at the fifty guns of their escort, he demanded of his brother, "If our war-ship had been the best armed would you have gone in by force?" and when the commandant did not reply he and Anthony put their heads together and went over the whole matter again. "I think our patent allows us to use our judgment about how to hold and *extend* the king's dominion." And he made round eyes as who should ask, "How far can a man go in the pursuit of such duties?"

Westward then moved these French ships. Cautiously they wound among the islands which

make a barrier between the rough waters of the Gulf and the northern coast. In the quieter channel thus formed they came to anchor and chose Ship Island for their first stopping-place. Here the war-ship left them: here the colonists built the first huts to shelter themselves.

The mouth of the Mississippi must be near at hand, but they did not know exactly where. Not wishing to risk his all as the unfortunate La Salle had done, the Sieur de Iberville left most of his colonists and his ocean-going ships at the island. Taking forty-eight men in two open boats he rowed westward still further along the coast.

The sky and sea were as blue as blue could be. The beach sands and the clouds were white as spray. The live-oaks and the pines marked the mainland with lines of beauty. In the channel porpoises at play stood up on their tails to make bows of welcome inviting the Frenchmen to follow them.

It was a pleasant thing to be sweeping along through this balmy air. Anthony's barytone began to mark the time for the oarsmen with the tune he had picked up at Tortugas. The new melody seemed oddly suited to the time and place.

"Teach him the words," cried de Graaf, and the sailors who knew a little of that difficult language called English were soon singing in

chorus with Anthony the words of the song once so popular:

"My name was Captain Kidd as I sailed, as I sailed,
My name was Captain Kidd as I sailed.
God's laws I did forbid and right wickedly I did
As I sailed!"

For two rollicking days they rang endless changes on this fascinating theme. On the third a storm overtook them. Not daring to put into the waters of the Gulf, the Sieur de Iberville decided to risk landing on the rocky coast.

Nobody, then, knew how big the world was. Longitude was not understood. Sailors had to guess at distances east and west. La Salle had thus gone past the Mississippi's mouth whose latitude he knew. The accident had brought his colony to a miserable end at the unfavorable place where they finally landed.

By a lucky chance, since there was no way to reckon the right spot, the Sieur de Iberville went straight into the Great River half hidden behind the outlying palisades. He saved his boats: he found his port. The place of landing he named Mardi Gras for the day, Tuesday, March 3, 1699.

It was a good beginning. After that all the adventurers were eager to go upon exploring parties, to make friends with the Indians, and to

build a town. The colonists were ready to set their homes almost any place upon the borders of this summer sea. So the city of the port of the Great River was begun, settled, and stockaded as the Sieur La Salle had prophesied that some day it would be.

It was better not to have all his resources in one place to tempt a buccaneer attack, and so Sieur de Iberville built another fort on Ship Island and one at Biloxi inlet on the north coast.

Ship Island was an ideal secret refuge, and when it was abandoned by the French colonists for larger quarters on shore it became a rendezvous for pirates of the Gulf. Its silver sand has buried many treasures of gold and gems and it has been dyed with the blood of captured crews. To-day a government station stands upon it and its wicked years are almost forgotten by the honest boats with respectable mariners now sailing tamely past it.

On the bay at Biloxi, the Sieur de Iberville's bastioned fort held a dozen cannon. Later still another fort was built in Mobile Bay. All were intended to guard the coming city at the mouth of the Mississippi and her immense domain. Anthony was one of many to work on these defenses against sea-robbers, or Indians, or rival nations.

One day, while he and the boyish de Bienville and a few armed followers were floating down

the Mississippi from one of their numerous scouting trips, what should they see but a full-rigged ship coming to meet them.

Their surprise was mixed with fear. For the ship was English and she carried sixteen guns. And, as they presently learned, a sister ship quite as strong lay off the mouth of the Great River. What if this commander turned those guns on their tiny new town? What if he captured these Frenchmen and took this smaller open boat with its four little cannon?

The stripling de Bienville was a master of men. He promised his crew that they should not be taken. Then he sent a friendly hail to the ruddy captain of the English and beamed confidently at his fellows when it was politely returned. Anthony, who loved courtesy, forgot how scared he was as he listened to the formal speech in which the two leaders conversed.

They used English, but he was able to understand that the Englishman was Captain Barr and that he had come at the command of his king and queen to take possession of the Mississippi!

Anthony's heart sank like lead. After all that Frenchmen had done and suffered to explore this river valley it seemed dreadful to lose it now by so unequal a battle as this would be if their little boat had to fight it out with the English ship. But de Bienville's boyish face

showed the friendliest interest in the Englishman's plans.

He assured Captain Barr that there *was* a Mississippi river. "I am *sure* of that," he stated positively in his frank young way, "for I've often heard the Indians speak of it. If you continue to sail along the coast line you will surely find some splendid stream. *This* river, of course, belongs to the French; there is one of our colonies on it; but there are other rivers, enough for all of us. You have our best wishes to take with you as you go in search of a Mississippi for *your* empire."

So this English Captain Barr turned his big ship about and, leaving the little French boat in control, sailed away never to return.

Quoth the wise de Bienville: "When we cannot win by force of arms, strategy is the thing. My dear du Gay, as you stood and nodded your head to confirm the stories I told, I have a fancy that you involved yourself in international intrigue. It is just possible that you and I may look like doubtful characters to Captain Barr's superior officers since we pulled a kingdom from his grasp. Men have walked the plank for less than we have done this day!"

Many captains of every nation were watched with suspicion in those days, for the riches of the New World sailing homeward toward the Old were a constant temptation to travelers, and

many privateers became pirates because it was such an easy way to make money. Not only Ship's Island, but almost any dot of land would do for a harbor to a band of smugglers or marooners. For a full century after the settlement of its mouth they flourished in the neighboring channels and bayous of the Great River.

All kings were alike to a pirate. He openly defied French, English, and Spanish rule. But when in the time of the War of 1812, "old Andy Jackson" came down to New Orleans to make a stand for democracy against the British redcoats, the smugglers and outlaws of the north coast, those ruffian Baratarians, with their strong sentiment for personal freedom and self-government, offered themselves to him. They were glad to fight for his cause.

Under the notorious Lafitte they came bringing all the ferocity of hand-forged guns and home-made knives and filibustered ammunition. They threw the whole of their buccaneering energy into the cause of the first republic of the continent. In that long struggle, when hope was almost gone, they helped to turn the scale for freedom and were one of the picturesque units who made possible the famous victory of New Orleans.

In de Bienville's time Captain Barr's was the earliest ship to threaten French rights. Whether

it was his turning back which displeased his government into challenging the Sieur de Iberville or whether there were commands from France to strike any rival before she struck them, Anthony as a subordinate couldn't find out, but there came a day when the commandant ordered the *Badine* and the *Marine* into action, and leaving de Bienville behind to look after the colonists, he sailed away to the island of Nevis and, taking it by surprise, captured it without trouble.

St. Christopher also belonged to England, and that the French meant to get on the same cruise. On its coral strand the tiny hamlet of thatched huts, palm grove, brilliant birds, and huge flowers seemed an easy little Noah's ark sort of town to pick up.

But alack-a-day! Its men were all at home. They proved to be, not timid natives under one domineering white man, but a very hornets' nest of recruiting buccaneers. And the Sieur de Iberville's soldiers, for all their vaunted military training, were hard pressed to subdue the town.

Now Anthony was not a soldier. He was attached to the Iberville expedition as an envoy to the Mississippi Indians. But when he saw the need of another sword arm, he hurriedly braided his hair and tied it back out of the way with his kerchief, loosened his collar for more air, rolled

up his sleeves, tightened his sash, snatched his pistol, and threw himself against the enemy.

The military formation of the ranks had been broken almost as soon as it touched the shore. The battle was not organized—it was a running fight—each Frenchman against the nearest buccaneer, hand to hand, up and down, back and forth, over the one long street of the toy village. Going at one another like a lot of fiends, they cut and hacked—shot and clubbed—guns were emptied—swords broken—teeth and nails used—any weapon to keep the next man off.

The buccaneers were disappearing. Victory seemed to be with the French. They paused for breath. Through the lull came the alarm: "The ship! The ship!"

The English had run for the harbor by a back way and were attacking the flag-ship! They scaled the swinging ladders. Repelling the owners like boarders, the rogues forced the French to fight madly for their own *Badine*. If the buccaneers could once get a ship like this they could sail the Gulf and river as full-fledged pirates. What a truly fine joke it would be if the men of St. Christopher should turn the French ship against the French port! It was one of the tricks of the Spanish Main to do such things.

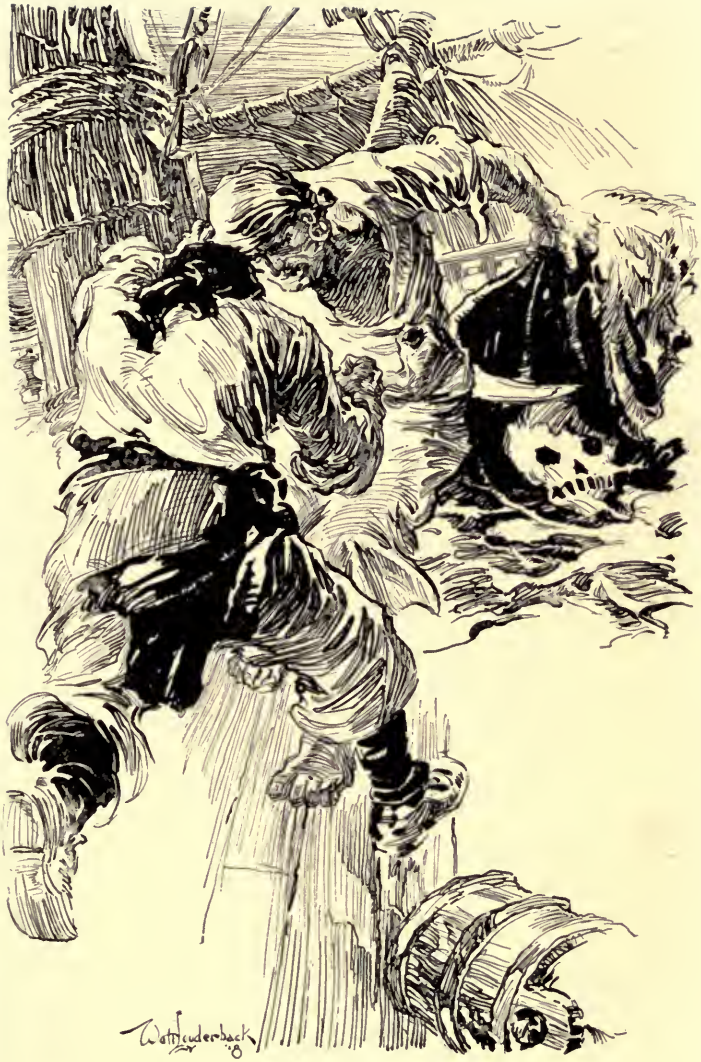
Anthony fought like a man of twice his size. He struggled for his own life, for the life of the

Mississippi port, for the life of New France. He banged away as though Joliet, Accau, Tonty, and La Salle were at his back. His hand never faltered. Over the rail into the bow he went headlong. A man was at the mast. The rascal all ready to pull down the French colors whipped out his own pennant—a white skull and cross-bones on a black field.

Anthony flung against him with all the force of desperation. Together they went down and rolled over and over the swaying deck; with the buccaneer on top they bumped into the rail.

One great hand with claws like knives had already torn Anthony's shoulder into slits; the other fastened on his throat; it was ready to tighten its strangle-hold. The vanquished one glared wildly at his would-be murderer. Then he began to laugh with his eyes. Who knew better than Anthony how to make merry with one glance? The buccaneer stared in wonder. His hold relaxed. Anthony's lips parted in as friendly a smile as ever a man could give. His assailant hung over him in perplexity. Anthony puckered his lips and whistled one bar. The buccaneer replied with that toothless grin of far-away Tortugas. Recognition had come to him. "Ho, brother," he laughed, "ho, ho! I didn't know ye."

Anthony began to chuckle contagiously, slapped his old friend on the back and fell to



ANTHONY FLUNG AGAINST HIM WITH ALL THE FORCE OF DESPERATION

laughing heartily and long. The fearsome strangler, like a huge bear diverted by a taste of honey, forgot the fight now raging in the stern and joined in a hoarse "Ha, ha, ha!"

Who can tell where a battle turns? Suppose the French flag had come down and the black flag had gone up! The sight of such an exchange would have encouraged the pirates to fiercer efforts. England might have wrested this little fleet from France. The control of the Mississippi would then have passed to another king.

With their leader so cunningly beguiled by Anthony that he was quite out of their sight and forgetting to strike where his hand was needed most, the pirates weakened. The desperate Frenchmen succeeded in pitching them into the sea. Dejected they swam ashore.

The Sieur de Iberville towered above them as they crawled upon the reef. His pistols were ready, his powder dry, all the advantage was on his side. He demanded their surrender.

They acknowledged his victory and gave up St. Christopher.

Anthony's sensitive ears had followed this last part of the foray as he sat huddled in the bow. The noisy laugher did not bother to notice anything. Anthony took a peep and pointed out to his friend that the buccaneers were already in irons. He whispered: "I don't want our soldiers to capture *you*. Take this plank,

drop over the side, float further down the beach and get away in safety."

"Keep the flag," mumbled the buccaneer; "show it to de Graaf. If ever you steal this ship I'll join your crew," and he disappeared over the rail.

When the *Badine* finally put out into the Gulf Anthony went to de Iberville's cabin to report. There he confronted himself in the mirror of its fine furnishings. His rough hair was braided into a queue and tied back with a bandana. His naked chest and arms were dirty, his clothes were in rags bound round with a sash. His stockings had been ripped away. His feet were bare. He looked at the uncouth figure that he presented. Where had he seen such another? His smile was gone. His voice was dull with misery.

"Tell me," he demanded, "what I am. Am I a patriot or am I a pirate?" With a pair of dreadful blood-stained hands he unfurled the black flag of such shocking design.

The Sieur de Iberville was also much disheveled, but he answered with the dignity of a victor. "The courts of all civilized nations are now busy with the problem: 'When is it right for men to fight on the high seas?' and until that is decided, if it ever can be, you and I must obey our superior officers." He laid a soothing hand on Anthony's wounded shoulder. "We have been

in very bad company this morning, du Gay. Lest we get into worse, let me advise you to tie a piece of lead in that captured rag and drop it overboard. Many a man no worse than you and I has been hanged because he carried the Jolly Roger!"

VIII

BROKEN POTS

Swashbucklers of Spain Duel for the Food of Pierre Le Moyne de Iberville—Hunger Seasons Sagimity.

ANTHONY knelt before a jar which held perhaps two gallons. It was of red hand-made pottery open at the top and it had a bail of withes. Low on one side was a hole leading into the vessel between its flat bottom and another ventilated over-bottom to create a draught. The jar was filled with fat pine shavings and dry cones. He struck his flint and after several trials lighted some dry grass which fired the resin in the pine. Then the tiny clay stove began to roar cheerfully. Setting another crock upon it and mixing in that a very little corn with too much water the Picard du Gay tried to tell himself that he was getting breakfast.

Provisions had run short at this fort of Biloxi, and Anthony, one of the twenty men left here to guard the Great River's mouth, had missed more meals than he liked to count. The

stockade on the Mississippi itself was no better furnished with men or food than this one. The main body of the colony had been moved several times in hope of better picking and was now at a third fort on Mobile Bay. Like all new settlements from the beginning of time until tomorrow, this one had not been able to fit itself to the country about it without making mistakes. One error after another in handling foodstuffs had brought about the catastrophe of famine.

The sea was alive with delicious fare. There were beds of oysters, runs of shrimp, and school after school of fish. The colonists had feasted on these as on a banquet without end. But they suddenly learned that each had its season. When one day they wanted more none were to be had. School was out as far as fish were concerned. Shrimp had run some place else. In warm weather oysters made the colonists sick.

The woods were full of deer, the prairies of buffalo, the glades of turkeys, the bayous of waterfowl, more meat than the French could eat in a lifetime. They did not bother to jerk any of these. Why should they work to dry flesh when there was so much that was fresh at their very doors? The Indians prepared some, it is true, but Indians themselves often take a chance on the future, and their not too provident example went unnoticed by the colonists. The climate felt much the same to the French as that

of their own Languedoc; Languedoc with a garden added like the Paradise where Adam and Eve gathered their daily bread from bushes.

The deer followed the spring northward for croppings of new leaves, the buffalo trotted away on paths which a lifetime of migration told them led to cool green grass. Game left for Canada. Even alligators dropped below reach into the mud. (Eating baked alligator tails is never a treat; it means that one is very hungry indeed.)

Once whole fields were glutted with wild strawberries and blackberries. Groves of mulberries and plums abounded. Luscious grapes clambered every hill. Nobody dried or preserved them. It seemed absurd to do so when there fell to the ground every day more than all France could have eaten. So the time of these fruits came and went and nothing remained to take their place.

Some of the finest foods can be made to grow in the sandy soil of the country back of Biloxi beach if one knows how, but the colonists didn't bother to inquire, and the only things that were now thriving under the July sun were clouds of mosquitoes.

Anthony sipped his gruel and gazed over toward Deer Island. The rising sun made the channel look so much like milk that poor du Gay was tempted to walk down and take a taste

of it. The pines were black against the burning sky and a soldier coming out on the long narrow point beyond them was silhouetted distinctly. As he went forward over the low sand reef he had the effect of walking on the water. His reflection in the white Gulf was as clear-cut as himself. Soldier and shadow moved along grotesquely, and Anthony thought the whole thing must be a mirage. But when the soldier staggered and fell with a very real splashing of water, the Picard jumped into his canoe and rowed across to see what was the matter.

The soldier was a Frenchman from the Mississippi stockade. Anthony knew him, picked him up and supported him, gently bathing his drawn face and questioning him.

"See all this pottery," cried the soldier, throwing out expressive hands, "smashed to bits! Do you suppose these bowls had corn in them when they were whole? I have followed a line of them out here to see if anything to eat had been left in them."

"How are the other soldiers at the stockade?" asked Anthony, to take his mind from this illusion of food caused by the sight of the scattered dump of Indian bowls.

"Our stores are almost gone; we are on rations. We are drinking river water." The soldier began to weep childishly. "I want a drink from our hillside spring in France. I need my breakfast!"

With promises which he was by no means sure he could keep, Anthony put the canoe in tow and helped the soldier into his own boat to take him to the fort. He had been sent from the stockade to beg for stores at Biloxi. Hunger-weary he had mistaken Deer Island for the beach and had run his felucca ashore there. If Anthony had not happened to see him he might have perished and the remaining soldiers at the stockade have waited in vain for the return of their messenger.

It was with a grave face that Anthony sailed the soldier's boat into Biloxi Bay and with a still heavier heart that he answered the hail of another coastwise sailing-vessel which was coming to meet him from the east. This second man was also a Frenchman, one of the colonists at Mobile. A glance at his yellow skin, sunken cheeks, and burning eyes told his whole story to Anthony. He, too, had been sent to beg for stores. There were women and little children, some old priests and helpless slaves in Mobile.

"We have eaten up our goats and our pigs; only the cows are left," was the report of the Mobile colonist as he and the Mississippi soldier were brought into the fort and presented to the Biloxi commandant by Anthony. "The Sieur de Iberville sent some of our men to live among the Indians who have a little but not much more than we ourselves. He sailed some

time ago for France to send provisions back to us with the greatest possible haste. Until they come will you share with us?"

They had nothing to share. The few men still at Dauphin Island and Ship's Island were in equal straits. From these pitiful beggars before the commandant Anthony turned and looked out of a loophole over the waste where his own and the other settlers' gardens should have been in toothsome bearing. Nothing was growing.

"I did not come to the New World to raise cabbages," he thought, resentfully. "I could have done that in Picardy without going out of my own gate. I came to seek my fortune, to carry home a galleon of gold." He smiled ruefully to think that if he could go back now to France he could take little besides his own bones.

As he felt so did all the adventurers. They spent their days in voyaging romantically up and down the Great River and through the bayous and among the islands round its estuary hunting for the gold and pearls which they expected to see shining in the sand or outcropping from the banks. Their nights were taken up with dreams of how they should spend this wealth when once it was found and shoveled into the boats and taken to France.

To be sure, Anthony with the best intentions had said to his Indian flunkies the same thing

the other Frenchmen said to theirs: "Plant me some of those juicy melons you know so well how to raise, and potatoes and plenty of maize and beans for the sickquatash, and some of that delightfully bad tobacco. Here are imported French seeds of cabbages and turnips and Old World vegetables. Plant them also."

The docile Indians had sowed the plantations. In the virgin alluvial soil under the warm spring rains the astonished seed from Picardy had grown like Jack's beanstalk. The Indians watching these huge creations were filled with superstitious fears. When an immense cabbage head had burst they shrieked in chorus, "Bad Medicine!" and ran away. Nothing could induce them to return. So the Frenchmen ordered the negroes—there were only a handful of them —"*You* tend the gardens."

The darkies promised. They really meant to do so that day or the next or the next. If the masters had directed them and stood over them there would have been provisions in plenty. But the masters went gold-hunting and the darkies lay in the shade and waited for the weeds to stop growing so they could pull them all at once. Now the gardens were in ruins and the owners hungry.

"Remorse is a dreadful thing," thought Anthony; "I can feel it gnawing at my belt and I am terribly ashamed." He turned back to the

commandant: "I suppose the question is, shall we ask alms of our nearest neighbors, our worst enemies, those cruel Spaniards at Pensacola?"

As it was quite impossible to send an armed force from the little group of impoverished, sick, and famished colonists to enforce a request, Anthony offered to go alone and beg.

The carelessness and short-sightedness of men in prosperity has never ceased to be a marvel. It is equaled only by the endurance and courage of the same men in trouble. Every one of the miserable colonists offered to take the voyage in Anthony's place. So it was arranged that if he should fail to return others were to follow on the same mission, since Louisiana—which was the name of nearly half of North America—had come to such a pass that she must say, "Give me food or I may die in savagery."

"Let me take as attendant that Chickasaw boy the scouts brought in this morning," was Anthony's only demand. "I can understand a little of his speech and perhaps on the voyage I may coax from him some news of the tribes north and learn why he is unfriendly toward us."

The captive spy was promised his freedom if he would serve Anthony as far as Pensacola, and he went sullenly enough with the only man whose words he knew. Anthony trusted to the intimacy of two days and a night to learn from

the Chickasaw all he knew that might serve the French in their distress.

So Anthony, beautifully groomed and dressed and taking his Chickasaw valet, rigged a sail to his canoe and started for Pensacola. In the bow he set his clay stove, some precious pounded corn in a bowl, and a porous jar which kept drinking-water cool by evaporation. Nobody then and nobody now in the neighborhood of the Mississippi can get along without a crock.

A vein of earth, a perfect potter's clay, outcrops on the lower reaches of the Great River. The fingers of prehistoric Indian children itched to mold splendid mud-pies just like the scarcely more skilful children of our times do on those same shores. No one knows who turned the first dish, dried it or baked it and painted it with stripes of color.

A primitive clay stove sails up and down the river and into the Gulf in almost every fisherman's boat to-day, just as it did on Anthony's trip. Big crocks in prosaic trucks now go merchandizing over the same Mississippi regions where once they traveled by picturesque Indian pick-a-back. On many southern window-sills the water-jars are still cooling in a draught.

Bricks for building houses on the river, tiles for roofing them and terra-cotta for ornamenting them, began to be manufactured early in the history of the colony. In the city of New Orleans

are potteries which have raised the making of mud-pies into a beautiful art. Here and there throughout the Mississippi system are talented dreamers who turn the clay into inspiring groups of the sculptor's art.

Sailing along the banks of pottery clay, Anthony measured out his bowl of corn and wondered if he could make it do for the Chickasaw and himself. As he sped under drive of wind and push of oar he glimpsed at intervals those great heaps of empty oyster-shells, the kitchen-middens, which proved that somebody in far-away days had feasted long and well on these now starving shores. It was not so very far by way of the coast to Pensacola Bay, and in good time he put into the harbor and asked for the governor of the post, one Don Francisco Martin. He was taken to an officer of the fort, and this is what was said:

"I am Anthony Auguelle, the Picard du Gay, representing the French of Louisiana in a message to your governor."

"You are a companion of the buccaneer pilot Lawrence de Graaf. I saw you both on the *Badine*. You are assigned to a dungeon on bread and water."

"In the name of France I demand an audience."

"In the name of Spain I will recommend you

to the Don Martin when he has nothing else to notice."

A prison is a dreadful thing; a Spanish dungeon the worst of all forms of confinement. The cruelties of the Inquisition which made such underground holes possible still sicken the thoughts of a civilized world. But Anthony was so spent with weariness that he ate his plain bread greedily—it was the first wheat bread he had tasted for months—and gulped the water gratefully. The darkness was a relief to his sand-dazzled eyes and the cold stones felt good to a sun-blistered back. He slept around the clock and clambered the ladder from his cell on the point of a bayonet at the bidding of the officer. He was in good spirits. The only really bad thing about a dungeon is to have to stay in it.

The Don Francisco Martin thought it a good plan, whenever possible, to give his rivals of France and England a taste of his dungeon. But life was so dull at the outpost of Pensacola and his curiosity about a French message was so great that he granted an audience in the courtyard on this second day.

"You are lately come from Paris," said the don, noting the cut of Anthony's fine coat. "Before we proceed to business we will entertain ourselves like gentlemen. I'm sure it will give you pleasure to show us the newest feints in fencing. Luckily I have three swordsmen at

hand to prove your skill," and he nodded to his gaoler, who picked up one of those immense brass keys which the Spaniards used with such gruesome effect, and went rattling down a shell-paved corridor.

Anthony looked at the smiling, whiskered don and he felt like a mouse under a tom-cat's claws. He viewed the garrison of rowdies crowding up to see a fight, and at the hot, empty sky, with narrowed eyes, as one who expects his only help from heaven.

Imagine his astonishment when the gaoler came clanking back with de Graaf a very shadow of himself, a toothless buccaneer much the worse for imprisonment, and a big Spaniard all gone to nerves.

Anthony covertly scanned the sky more than once as he listened to the don's mocking words: "All these soldiers of fortune have arms with them; you shall cross swords. Who survives the duel gets his freedom and his request." And the sarcasm, "A gentleman's game for gentlemen!"

Now Anthony Auguelle did not belong to the blood royal. The don was sure of that. The Picard du Gay had become a gentleman in heart and appearance through association with the best explorers of his time. But under the lash of the Spaniard's tongue he thought it best to affect that haughty bearing supposed to be

one of the marks of a title. And he thought this the right time to use the bits of news he had gained from the Chickasaw.

"I will not kill de Graaf," he declared, "for you, Don Martin, need him to read a message in the air," and he waved his hand dramatically toward puffs of smoke which he had at last discovered floating in the northern sky.

The don stood up. The sentries ran for their neglected posts. The soldiers sprang to arms. Every neck was craned. As a hint to de Graaf, Anthony gave a meaning gesture toward the Chickasaw at his heels, and de Graaf, who lived by his wits, was ready to answer with confidence when the surprise abated: "That, Don Martin, is the signal of the Chickasaws who are coming toward your fort to besiege it. I heard their war-drums along the coast before I was taken by your men."

The don turned to Anthony, who touched the Chickasaw, who in turn spoke a gruff word to a Spanish interpreter. It meant that his tribe were in arms. De Graaf was thus confirmed in his statement.

The don's brows were drawn; his eyes grew keen.

"I will not kill the buccaneer," cried Anthony again. "I throw him a purse of gold instead," suiting his action to his boast, "and so will you, Don Martin, when he tells you what *he* knows."

While the don stared at Anthony, that gambler with fate, smiling at the buccaneer, began to chuckle and then to laugh. The sea-robber responded like a child with a tickled rib. "Tell the don, my bully boy"—here Anthony spoke slowly to be sure he had the Anglo-Saxon words—"what the Carolina English will do to Pensacola and to Biloxi."

"Ho-ho-ho!" roared the buccaneer. "It's a secret. I must not tell."

"When I and the Chickasaw and de Graaf know it, it is a secret no longer. Tell the don and save your neck."

Like the unthinking dog he was, the buccaneer obeyed Anthony as his master and declared, "English ships are ready to come down the Atlantic in double force to surprise you."

The don considered his four sources of information. He did not for one moment doubt Anthony's honesty; nobody ever did. It was plain that the news was true.

"By Chickasaws on land and English on sea French and Spaniards are to be cracked like bugs between two boards. What is your advice, du Gay?"

The answer was prompt: "Release my Chickasaw and your buccaneer to tell their different peoples the plot is discovered. It will not be carried out this time. It is much easier to discourage than it is to defeat the English. Send

de Graaf to warn the fort at Mobile and let the Indian and the buccaneer see him get away so they may report that too."

Then the don grinned: "It shall be done. I would I had you for a friend, du Gay. You release your admirers in trios, throw pardons with a king's hand. What for yourself?"

"When I rid us of this swordsman I shall ask a boon," and he turned to the Spanish prisoner. It would not help Anthony's cause to disappoint the garrison who pined to see a fight. Thus Anthony took the ring with the swagger of a matador and the spirit of a game-cock.

Luck had followed him so far. A whole loaf of bread had filled his worst need and he drew his blade with confidence. The big Spanish jailbird was both strong and skilful, but two weeks in a black dungeon with rats, lice, and the fear of hanging had given him a wild eye and a shaking hand. He thrust strongly but not well. He was desperate and erratic. In normal health he could have split Anthony like a rabbit, but not to-day.

During the first few minutes it was more a game of tag than fencing. The two jumped about as though they were grasshoppers. Anthony's one idea was to save himself from the half-insane Spaniard. In a little while the big one began to weaken. Then Anthony thought it proper to amuse the spectators by airing the

fancy thrusts and feints and all the fads that he had practised in Paris. Cheer followed cheer. This was what they wanted to see. The don himself was longing for just such a show. So Anthony continued it as long as he thought the Spaniard could stand up; on guard for bursts of passion on his opponent's part.

It was a sorry game.

Anthony, bent on winning his own ends, cared nothing for the ethics of a duel. When he saw his man ready to drop he thrust forward and pinned him against a post. But he did not drive his sword through the Spaniard, as was his right, as the don nodded permission, and as the whole colony now assembled whooped and howled and begged for him to do. Instead, he signaled the crowd to silence and, withdrawing his blade, wiped it airily on a bit of lace kerchief and announced: "I present his life to the fort. He is expert. Such will do good work against the Chickasaw."

The crowd, who a minute before would have been glad to see his blood spurt, now greeted the Spaniard with hurrahs, dragged him to the kitchen, and feasted him. Pensacola, a much older place than Biloxi, had learned to conserve its products. There was no food shortage among these Spaniards.

Don Francisco Martin seemed to be regretting that irony about gentlemen. He gave Anthony

a friendly hand and said, sincerely, "I will be glad to grant you any request I can."

And the Picard du Gay said, simply, as one man to another, "My people are starving; unless you feed us we must perish."

So a ship was loaded with stores. Lest the hunger-wild Frenchmen should eat food without proper cooking and thus add an epidemic to their woes, the don ordered the half-deck covered with great bowls. Each was filled with the savory stew of venison and corn or rice and dried fish which the Indians dub sagimity.

And who shall say how that ship came in? The starving French, lost to all feeling but the primitive call of hunger, thronged the bay to watch her drop anchor. They wept aloud and gurgled with laughter. They danced and hugged one another. They rushed into the water, stretching bony fingers; got beyond their depth, and had to be rescued with scoldings and ridicule in the midst of the utmost confusion. When the boat began to unload, the grateful French kissed the hands of their enemies, the Spaniards, and knelt to bathe their feet with happy tears.

As the sagimity came to shore they fell upon it and guzzled like kittens in the cream, quite unashamed. They stood upon the beach to sup and to feed one another. From one bowl to another they hurried, abandoning this, shoving it aside for that, running to another, stepping

on it, heedlessly crushing it down into fragments. They had endured slow starvation with pathetic dignity, but the smell and sight of savory stew was too much for decorum, and half the emptied jars were thrown aside with a crash in the mad rush for full ones.

Many settlements have perished for lack of food. Starvation is an ill as old as the human race. It shows its skeleton head at some place on our globe almost every year of the world. The Great River itself has had many hungry times, but none quite so strange as this one when lifelong foes became friends and the beach was strewn with fragments of the crockery brought by the rescuers.

The Indians, who, while waiting their turn at the feast, looked on at the uncontrollable appetites of the succored French, pointed with stolid significance to the long pile of ruined dishes on the beach of Deer Island.

When Anthony, offering food to them, asked what they meant, they answered: "What has happened once can happen again and yet again. In the time of our fathers we, too, were fed by enemies as you are saved to-day, and there we got our name, for the guardian Indians of the Mississippi are called Biloxi, and the word Biloxi means the Broken Pots."

IX

THE SLAVE SHIP

A Hurricane Brings Odd Guests to His Colony for the Governor, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville—Voodoo in Rag-time

SHOUTING of white men, screaming of black ones, startled Anthony as he came down the main street of the port town called New Orleans in honor of the regent duke of France.

"That must be a brawl in the slave-mart," was his first thought as he began to run. He wanted to be at hand if the Sieur de Bienville needed him to help quell it.

Several bad colonists, with worse slaves, had joined the Mississippi French by crossing over from the West Indies in small boats at amazing risk. They navigated from point to point in fair weather through the Gulf of Mexico. The heavy seas were avoided when possible. The waterways in the protected channels between the coast-line islands had made the voyage possible. Vessels now entered the Mississippi by way of the east through Lake Pontchartrain, a much safer path than through the Delta.

They had brought with them blackamoors and several kegs of rum.

New Orleans had not been glad to see them. But the Sieur de Bienville had given each slave-owner a parcel of land on which to build shelters and lay out gardens. He hoped to keep the masters busy and the negroes so separated that they would work quietly. He tried to make both classes add to the usefulness of the port. The very good plan did not prove a success. In less than a week here were the newcomers back in the heart of the town, turning the orderly market-place into a scene of riot. Drunken owners were beating drunken servants.

The scandalized settlers had already called out their French soldiers against the renegades from the West Indies. The uniformed ranks passed Anthony at double-quick as he hurried along. By the time he had gained the open square where the auction-block stood the unpopular white immigrants, doubly guarded, were on their way to the only prison the settlement could boast.

The slaves still lay about in disgraceful sodden heaps. The Sieur de Bienville, self-possessed and active, was already giving commands to have them carried to the different plantations where they belonged. By the marks on their ears they were sorted out like cattle at a fair.

Young de Bienville, passionately ashamed at

such a scene and full of pity for the ill-treated blacks, was going among them and examining their injuries.

"To make these poor creatures suffer so lessens their usefulness for days. Ten thousand livres' worth of damage has been done to valuable human chattels in the last half-hour," he cried, indignantly. "When I shall have power to dictate a black code, and strength to enforce it, no slave shall be abused nor given rum to drink."

He looked to Anthony for sympathy. He did not get it, for that witness of the reformer's vow was leaning over a prostrate bleeding slave. Anthony's face was not sorrowful, but full of the liveliest interest. This slave was old and wizened and, what was a rare thing to see, his wool was as white as a dandelion puff. Anthony gazed at him as though he had found a gem.

"What now?" demanded the Sieur de Bienville, shocked at Anthony's callous pose.

"Listen!" whispered Anthony, "listen! He groans in a high minor key. When he cries with pain his wailings take the form of a most unusual rhythm, as if he were singing to express his woe. These blacks are different from our own slaves. They have another form of patois and they may also have a new kind of music."

The Sieur de Bienville's blue eyes went dark with disgust. "You are all ears and tongue,

Tony; you act as though you had no soul." And he stalked away, resolving to add to his code, "Slaves shall be authorized to give information against heartless masters."

Anthony's curiosity was not really unkind. It was a matter of business. He was the one whom the French settlers expected to act as interpreter for them in a land where every Indian tribe spoke a different language and every set of blacks had another jargon. For that reason Anthony was usually attended by some Indian boy whom he had picked up on one of his many exploring voyages with the Sieur de Bienville. Any such Indian acted as a tutor to Anthony in his own particular dialect and as a servant to his master's whims. So it happened that Anthony was now attended in the market-place by a red slip of a Chouacha. And when the white-headed blackamoor could not be brought to consciousness at once it was the Chouacha who bathed and dressed the wounds caused by a metal-tipped whip and who carried the sighing, singing wretch to a cot in Anthony's own cabin.

The Sieur de Bienville would have been still further provoked and perplexed could he have seen how Anthony spent the whole day hanging over his patient. When he found that his voice could not mimic the delicate falsetto notes which came through the old darky's thick lips,

he got out his violin and caught many of the curious sobbing sounds. In the intervals of nursing he practised on its strings the elusive strains of this weird music.

Within the next few days the men from the West Indies were forced to put up some of their slaves for sale, to pay the expenses of their debauch. So Anthony again hastened to the market-place to see what was going on.

Atop of the block in the noise and jostling of a rapidly moving auction stood, one after another, several splendid blackamoors shining like lacquered teakwood, grinning good-naturedly, and rolling white, conceited eyes which told that each knew he was worth a bag of livres. Oddly enough, they had none of the humility which marked the French slaves. Something overconfident, reckless, defiant, was in the manner of them all.

"Tell me, Tony, what *is* the stir among these people?" demanded the Sieur de Bienville. "I don't understand it and I don't like it. Is there mischief coming?" He was giving serious attention to this sale of blacks. He was lieutenant of the governor; much care fell upon him. He was thinking: "I am going to replace this haphazard handling of live men with a better system. It will be both humane and economical to enforce a set of rules to protect a slave from violence and the master from loss."

His thoughts began to take the form of that book of regulations which were afterward completed by French statesmen, approved by the king, made laws under the famous title of the Black Code, and finally enforced throughout the valley of the Great River.

He never thought of such a thing as freeing all the blacks. Slavery of negroes was a part of the social system of those days. No one dreamed of questioning its right. The Sieur de Bienville was one of the first men on the continent to demand justice or mercy for a blackamoor.

Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne—for that was the Sieur de Bienville's name—was a French-Canadian aristocrat, fair, beautiful, rich, and carefully reared. In his noble impulse was the beginning of the development of the captive race.

More than a hundred years after this time another youth, dark, plain, poor, and self-educated, of that pioneer American race which followed the French to the Mississippi, left his flatboat at the dock in New Orleans and came to stand in this same market-place. Like the Sieur de Bienville, he felt his heart contract with pity, his sense of justice stir. He used the blunt speech of the modern midwest instead of the elegant French of the early south, but he was of the same mind when he said of that slavery which the auction-block revealed, "If I ever have a chance to hit that thing, I'll hit it hard!"

Like Bienville, too, he carried out his resolution. During the Civil War when north and south were quarreling as to whether freedom or slavery should prevail, this same American pioneer set his signature, *Abraham Lincoln*, to an Emancipation Proclamation. Because of his power as President of the United States and commander of the army and navy he freed four million slaves.

But the Sieur de Bienville did not want any such great change. His plans, as he watched the auction, were for minor reforms, and he kept a wary eye on the restless slaves all about him. His stockades, his soldiers, his armament for the protection of his settlers, were in perfect order. Plots and mutiny among the blacks were not uncommon.

Anthony was waiting for a bid to be set upon the white-headed one whom he had rescued and who was to be sold for debt. "Damaged goods," quoth he, "will be sold at a bargain. Such are 'poor men's slaves.' I'll buy my tuneful cripple."

When the little old man was hoisted to the block, he stared at the crowd of slaves in a manner both cunning and defiant. They answered as though he had spoken, by a curious stirring among themselves. He drew them toward him as by a magnet; he was full of a sense of power. Anthony and the Sieur de

Bienville could make nothing of this undercurrent among all the blacks.

After having bought him at half-price and having spent many more hours jabbering with him, fiddling his one tune in gayer syncopated time and trying to tame him, the Picard du Gay made up his mind that he had spent his money for a cotton-crowned sinner who had some evil work in hand and who would bear watching.

When, therefore, the black slipped like a shadow from their gallery at dusk, Anthony beckoned the Chouacha and together they took his trail. It was a gloomy evening, and so sly was he in looking back that they had to follow at long distances.

On the crooked path he made they almost lost him. If it were not for other black prowlers—very many of them—going to the same lonesome group of moss-bearded live-oaks, even the Indian might have missed him altogether.

The grove was surrounded by numerous sentinels. Alone Anthony could not have stolen in. But no black man can outwit an Indian on his native ground, so the Chouacha set his moccasined feet on dry twigs, crisp palmetto, and grinding rocks without making a sound, and Anthony in similar gear followed him, unheard and unseen, to a clump of bushes overlooking the meeting-place.

There was a mystic, wavering, half-smothered

fire in the center of the group, which included, to Anthony's alarm, both the West-Indian blacks and the New Orleans negroes. There was an appalling crowd of them. The ancient one, Anthony's own, was the center of the horde and its chief spirit.

Slaves were not allowed to carry weapons, not even heavy sticks, yet this old man was passing around knives enough to arm them all. Anthony clasped his hand to his belt. His own knife was gone! The slaves had stolen from their masters! This display of knives augured ill for some one. The whole concourse looked sinister, the old leader horribly so.

Anthony began to be worried. Unarmed slaves in mutiny were bad enough, but if each carried an unsuspected knife he might do dreadful murders. Together this band of plotters could destroy the colony.

The Chouacha was stolid, but even he could see that a massacre was on foot. Anthony tried to tell himself that this meeting might be only some savage fresh-meat feast or barbecue. While his better thoughts said this, the cold sinking pit of his stomach told him otherwise.

The Picard du Gay had seen many red dances, but never a black one. His numbed brain could not give in detail afterward the little he witnessed of this. The old man led the singing of that same moaning, diabolical song which Anthony

had caught on his fiddle-strings. All the slaves singing it marched round him, while he alone danced barefooted in and out of the living fire, treading down the coals as though they were leaves. He conjured with toads; he drooled incantations; his nose-ring flopped; his amulets rattled.

The sultriness of the swamp oppressed the watchers. The air was heavy and ominously still, as though a storm were coming. Anthony began to have all sorts of ticklings; something might be crawling on his neck or coiling round his ankles. He wanted to get away and run to tell the French of possible danger. He could not stir; the dance had hypnotized him.

Something glistening slid along a tree on the opposite side of the firelit group. It thrust a serpent's head into the light. The old man rested a hand upon it. As the thing shook the man shook; as the man shook all the blacks shook. Their bodies quivered, their eyes rolled, the very ground seemed to tremble. Anthony felt the contagion spreading over him from top to toe.

Voodoo! The wizened old blackamoor was a wizard! Voodoo!

"I go," whispered the Chouacha, "to rouse the town!"

Was Anthony afraid? Certainly not! Did he believe he could be changed by an evil charm

into a beast? Of course he didn't! But he hated snakes; and in his nervousness he did an unwise thing. He leveled his pistol through an opening in the bushes, drew a delicate bead on that wavering demon, and with one quick, splitting, banging shot he blew away the serpent's head.

The voodoo doctor was almost stunned. A full moment of tense silence followed this unexpected sorcery. Then the sky was crossed from side to side with a great white bolt of fire. By its light all saw the distant Chouacha running. Then came crash on crash of thunder in the sudden darkness. On the ears of the frenzied voodoo dancers it beat like the summons of a tom-tom. The voodoo himself answered with a shout.

Brandishing their knives, they followed him in a roaring mob as he started after the Chouacha to hoodoo their masters and all the race of whites.

The Sieur de Bienville, always suspicious of the colonists from the West Indies, was armed, as usual, and ready to respond at once to the Chouacha's alarm.

He had often given the soldiers orders not to shoot any valuable negroes who might run amuck. They were to be clubbed into submission, but not killed. Now he changed his command to: "Powder and ball! Shoot to kill!" The Chouacha's warning was not a minute too soon.

What a struggle that was! The negroes had not believed the whites would be ready. The whites had not imagined the negroes would be so well armed. The clash was something of a surprise to both. There have been many bloody uprisings among the New World blacks, many pathetic and losing rebellions, but none fraught with such consequences as the memorable one in New Orleans. Were white men to hold the Mississippi port and its lands for their kind of civilization, or was New France to become a negro republic as Santo Domingo and Haiti did? That was what the quarrel meant. That was why it became a fight to the death on both sides.

If after two centuries of development and training a President of the United States could say of the American soldiers who helped the island of Cuba win her freedom, "Our colored troops fought well at San Juan," what might not be said of the desperate bravery with which the West-Indian fanatics fought that long-ago battle in the streets of New Orleans when the voodoo doctor led them to make a strike for themselves? Here also the blacks fought well—too well for the safety of their cruel masters.

The howling of the storm, darkness broken by the awful lightning, accompanied the mob as it attacked and the French citizens as they defended themselves.

At the same time, during that strange and terrible hour there came laboring out of the Gulf, as vanguard of the wind, an old ship seeking a place of shelter. She was rickety and rotten, ancient and condemned, fit for no decent use. And so she had been taken to hold a cargo of the veriest misery on earth, a tribe of stolen blacks.

Some sorely hurt by the pitching ship, some dying, some already dead, all without hope during the long, hard voyage, the ill-fated ship bore them through the Great River's mouth and to the port at New Orleans where raged this battle of the races.

A flash showed her coming on like some huge swollen image in a dream, magnified by clouds and lightning. The plotters and the planters alike paused in mid-action to blink at what they could not believe they really saw. By the next flash the hurricane had struck the town—a chaos of wind and rain, falling houses, rending trees.

No fighting could go on.

Another flash, and a great waterspout, child of the hurricane, could be seen whirling up the river; another, and the waterspout had struck the ship, beat her down, crushed her!

Anthony's ears never forgot the shrieks of the drowning wretches flung from the ship into the water, nor the roar of the storm as, breaking through the forest in front of her, it tore its way

across country. After a few dreadful moments a bright moon seemed to jump into the sky. All was clear and quiet again. The tropical storm had come and gone in the space of a few minutes. Both whites and blacks, turned from their purpose by the appalling accident, rushed to the salvage of the human wreckage. Many from the ship were hauled ashore; some were washed away. All were in distress. The square of the slave-mart was turned for the second time within the week into an outdoor hospital.

When the excited blacks had rushed from their attack to the rescue of the slaves caught in the rigging of the broken ship, the voodoo tried in vain to rally them to fighting-pitch. They were bent on getting out the drowning men, their brothers.

Then he secretly called aside his most devoted band of zealots. Pointing out the Chouacha and reminding them that the Indian had been the one they saw running through the lightning flash to set the town to arms, he swore them to eternal vengeance against all Indians and sent them scurrying back through the forest to the Chouachas' village.

Here the voodoo doctor's afrites caught the peaceful natives by surprise, butchered many of them, set their town on fire, and, returning in violent haste to New Orleans, tried for the second time to draw the negroes into battle.

But it was too late. Some were in manacles, some in jail, and some meekly caring for the victims of the slave ship.

This attack on the Indian village made all Indians the enemies of the negroes for many generations; and since this hatred forbade the two races from uniting against the French, the voodoo's worst deed was the one which best protected the town from the possibility of other mutinies, for, whatever the negroes planned in revolt, the revengeful Indians defeated it. Anything the Indians proposed to do unlawfully the blacks told to the authorities for spite.

The voodoo's power was at an end.

He guessed that his intimates would be hanged (they promptly were) and that he himself would be subjected to some of the dreadful torturing punishments of that age. He preferred a dramatic taking-off. So in the cold gray dawn in the sight of the still waking populace, red, black, white, he ran out upon the rail of the slowly settling ship, sang his wailing conjurer's song, and, plunging Anthony's knife to its hilt in his heart, fell headlong into the Great River. Before the eyes of the whole town his body spun round and round as it sank.

Even to-day, when the dawn is cold after a storm in the full of the moon, there are times when some watchers think they see the ghost of the voodoo whirling in the eddy at that same

place, a wicked ghost that has been hoodooed and can never get away from the scene of his crime nor rest in peace because the bad he tried to do to the three races of the Mississippi was turned by the fate of the slave ship into lasting good for them all.

X

PRETTY PRINCESS

Maids of the Natchez Send Tomahawks to Surprise Fort Rosalie—Fashions in Scalps

SAILORS clinging to the rigging with toes and fingers sang an echoing chantey as one by one they furled the canvas wings of the frigate coming through Lake Pontchartrain to anchor before New Orleans.

The frigate, a splendid ship of fifty guns, had belonged to one of the Le Moyne brothers, de Iberville; another, de Châteauguay, was her captain; and a third, de Bienville, was the governor of these colonies she had come from France to supply. There was a large family of the patriotic Canadian Le Moynes in active service throughout the New World. Like all the lesser French nobles, each was called by the title of the estate he owned instead of his parent's name.

News that the ship had been sighted spread so quickly that by the time she had arrived not

only the people of the town, but all the blacks from the outlying plantations and many red natives of forest camps, were on the dock to meet her.

The Sieur de Bienville kept a thousand details in his mind. "Run, Tony," he commanded the Picard du Gay, "and offer your services as interpreter to the Natchez chief of the White-Apple region. Be sure that some of the uniformed officers do him homage; see that the daughter and her attendant maids receive a present. Watch you, too, and give the blacks the signal to bob and duck at the proper places."

At the same moment the White-Apple chief was saying to the Apple-Blossom at his side: "Allow our white brothers to make friends. Much is to be gained from a boat like this."

The coming of an overseas ship is a time of tense feeling in any port at any age of the world. Fortunes stay or go, hearts rejoice or break, with the destiny of an argosy. The New Orleans people and the immigrants alike laughed and cried with the pleasure and excitement of meeting. Whether they were kinsfolk or strangers, they chattered together.

Many of these new settlers were farmers and artisans. They brought implements for tilling the land and special tools for mechanical trades. The Mississippi French had learned that if their towns were to grow, somebody had to go to work.

A whole regiment of troops had come to supply the garrisons. Quantities of munitions and stores to maintain them were in the hold. Several priests and nuns were among the passengers. All were welcomed by cheer after cheer.

On deck and on shore interest centered in an item of the cargo, a bevy of girls, shipped from the mother country by the king as a gift to the colony. Chaperoned by nuns, they came to the dock half-shyly, half-boldly.

Anthony Auguelle, stationed with the Indians, was embarrassed. He twisted his best cap round and round and dangled its plume. Four girls were looking at him and he didn't know what to do. The every-day smile which he used for officers, priests, red men, and negroes with such good effect faded away. He was grave and awkward. The girls passed him with indifferent tosses of their dainty heads.

His Majesty had sent them to persuade the too lively young bachelors of the colony to settle down in sedate home life. They were penniless orphans of Paris. Nothing could be lost by venturing into another country; fortune and happiness might be gained thereby. Romance and adventure called to them as it had to their brothers, and they had answered blithely.

With no dowry except the tiny hand-trunks of

personal needs with which the crown had furnished them, they would have gone unclaimed in the matrimonial markets of the capital. On the brink of the Great River their ruffles and ribbons, coquettish headgear of lace, small, neat shoes, their whole feminine charm, sent the pulses of backwoodsmen to fluttering. Straightway each maid had her choice of a dozen suitors.

French overlords, even on the remotest borders, kept up the dignity of the Empire by holding court in as formal an imitation of the royal audience at Versailles as they could.

The hall at New Orleans, built of bark-covered logs, was large and high. A mammoth fireplace at one end and a canopied dais with a throne-like chair gave it an air of state. In its impressive atmosphere the Sieur de Bienville received all the colonists as graciously as any king could have done.

Immigrants from the poverty-stricken lower middle class of workaday France were enchanted with the semi-tropical luxuriance of this new land of parti-colored races. The elegance of the reception-chamber appealed to their love of change. Where else in the wide world could common people be associated so cordially with uniformed soldiers and their gorgeous officers, be waited upon by fantastic blackamoors, be introduced to a dusky princess more beautiful

than any one they had ever seen? She spoke to them in the French phrases Anthony had taught her. Her maids danced with the officers the steps that his fiddle had measured for them in his visits to the White-Apple plantation.

The governor patronized all the marriage ceremonies which the priests performed for the king's maids. He presided over the fête which followed.

The first days of the new colonists were happy ones. A fraternal policy demanded that they be made to feel at ease and that the intelligent, semi-barbarous Natchez be assured of the newcomers' kindness.

Anthony sulked. "I did not want one of the maids," he explained, pettishly. "but I hate to be sniffed at."

"Neither was I chosen," replied the tactful Sieur de Bienville. "Let us console each other by thinking how the hands of women will improve our town of clumsy men. Then will be scrubbing and good cooking and clean curtains and flower-gardens—"

Anthony interrupted: "And no dogs and no cock-fights and no fun of any sort! I am going back to the wilderness!"

The Sieur de Bienville's laughing face went grave. "You are needed in the Natchez forest, Tony. So much is at stake that I shall go with you. The friendliness which you have begun

with the restless White-Apple must continue until we are sure of the tribe's allegiance. We will go with the returning Indians to their village. It does not matter if we French quarrel among ourselves; we can forget and make up again. But when our traders offend the Indians, as has lately been done, the natives remember and resent it, planning secret revenge."

"The Natchez welcome a dog as they do his master; game-chickens abound," cried Anthony. "Let us go!" and away they both paddled with the chief.

It seemed more like play than politics to be rowing up-stream in the Natchez delegation through country where so many notable events were to happen. They specially observed a bluff something over a hundred miles above New Orleans where great red cypresses stood. Each was like a painted post, or a *bâton rouge*, as they pronounced it. They planned to build a fortress there, little dreaming that a capital city by the name they gave would one day flourish on the spot. From Baton Rouge for many miles north the banks they passed were within the century to become the refuge of the three thousand French Acadians driven out of Nova Scotia into such pathetic exile that the story of their "Evangeline," as told by the poet Longfellow, will never be forgotten as long as this bit of "Acadian coast" retains its name.

While Anthony played his fiddle to cement the peace between the White-Apple people and the French, the Sieur de Bienville as a military precaution put into perfect working order a tiny near-by outpost of three stockaded log cabins which he had built some years before. His brother Iberville had chosen the site. It was the first permanent settlement on the Mississippi and was called Fort Rosalie. On its foundation was afterward laid the American city of Natchez.

Since the Great River came out of the void and wet the feet of the first dinosaur there has never been a dull minute upon it. Anthony's gray eyes were always hunting for unusual sights.

"What is that?" he whispered to the Sieur de Bienville on the homeward way as some heavy creature like a huge water-rat stirred among the roots of a tree hidden under the bank.

"Paddle nearer, Tony. Faster! It may be a wounded man."

It was a *coureur de bois*, not hurt in body, but so frightened that his state was pitiful.

"The Natchez murdered my two companions days and days ago," he screamed, in hysterical relief, when he found that he was rescued from his slimy cave by men of his own nation. "What will the post do about such an outrage?" he demanded, wildly. "Are traders to be sacrificed

without revenge?" He pounded distracted hands upon his chest.

As he fed the poor thing, who had been living upon raw fish and roots for a long time, the officer asked, "What did your companions do first to the Natchez?"

"We walked around in their funny church a little; that's all," faltered the *coureur de bois*. "The White-Apple's daughter saw us and threw a tomahawk at us. She hit first one and then another." He turned very pale as he recalled the sight. "I escaped by falling in the river."

"Not the pretty Apple-Blossom?" gasped Anthony. "Not our gentle pupil in French and music who came to the wedding?"

The Sieur de Bienville inclined his head. "She has charge of the maids who help tend the temple's sacred fire which came from the sun and which never goes out. These men profaned a sanctuary."

"She should have tomahawked you, too!" cried Anthony to the *coureur de bois*. "You foolish fellows came near being the death of us all. We have spent a week soothing the Natchez. We could not find out why they were angry."

"They will never forgive nor forget. It is only one of the many indignities done them by your careless acts. If you promise never to mention the murder or to stir up trouble about it I'll carry you with us," said the stern young

officer. "Otherwise back you go into the river."

The *coureur de bois* agreed to silence. They took him to New Orleans, an abject prisoner.

Yet many days later, when there came messengers, one tumbling over the other in their frantic haste to tell of a massacre of settlers at several small posts, he began to babble his story, and the cry went round: "The Natchez! The Natchez did it. We must subdue the Natchez!"

The young wives from France were panic-stricken at this frightful menace of armed savages. Husbands who for themselves would not have minded a few Indians on the war-path were now excited by the uncontrollable terror of the women. They demanded of Bienville the extinction of the Natchez. A mob spirit grew.

"Do you see the gray moss hanging from the live-oaks?" these citizens cried. "The Spanish and the Indians call its clusters 'French wigs.' If we do not kill these Natchez, then shall our hair dangle in like festoons from every branch."

"Give us action!" howled the soldiers. "We came to protect the colony. Now is the time to strike!"

The distressed governor sighed heavily. He could not afford mutiny of his troops nor the desertion of his citizens. Neither could he trust the Natchez, who no longer trusted him.

"It is the beginning of the end," he told Anthony, sadly. "The condition of peace between two nations for which our priests hoped is too ideal. None of us on either side are self-controlled enough to maintain it."

He hastily filled his bateaux with several hundred men, hurried under sail and oar up the Mississippi to Fort Rosalie, marched out from there, took the Natchez by surprise, and fell upon them with gun and bayonet.

Now Anthony loved a fight. For his vivacious nature it was the best way to clear the air. Pummeling some rude fellow who needed it was a satisfaction. But this battle was not a fight. It was war; cruel, bloody war. His whole soul sickened at cutting down these Indians whose artistic, half-civilized towns had so often been his shelter. He had a childish fancy that if he had been given time to go about among them with the fiddle they loved, he could have brought peace again.

It was too late. They were beaten by the sword. Conquered and subdued, the Natchez agreed to whatever the French dictated. Fort Rosalie became the headquarters of the Sieur de Bienville. Under his direction the sullen Indians labored at enlarging the fort which had taken their freedom from them. Many of the king's maids and their husbands came to its shelter to found homes.

Then the Sieur de Bienville was called to France and Anthony wandered disconsolate from the fort, now under a commander as heartless as Bienville had been kind.

Although the plantations were destroyed, the Natchez temple to the sun, their deity, stood inviolate. The village looked the same as ever. Anthony often went there unafraid. Some of his old welcome still remained when they accepted his gifts. For in Indian-land one speaks by a present. If he gives nothing it is the same as though he were silent.

"Make me a pipe," the pretty princess coaxed him one day, "a flute of several reeds." She selected some from a handful she held. She counted the others carefully and tied them in bundles, the same number in each. "Play me a tune upon it; not a sad song because the new governor demands that we give up our town to him, but a joyous air which tells that the sun still shines."

Anthony made the pipe and taught her maids a triumphant tune. The princess gave him a bundle of reeds. "Destroy a reed each day. When there is only one left come again and we will give you a present of tender chickens and fresh eggs—all that our chiefs can carry, to take to the fort. The delicacies will speak for us and show our feeling of submission to the conquerors." Her smile was not a pleasant thing to see; it worried him.

With an anxious mind the Picard du Gay took his bundle of reeds. He made the rounds of the small settlements dependent on Fort Rosalie and warned them that the Natchez meant mischief. He pleaded with the officers of the fort to reinforce themselves. He could not explain what the reeds meant nor tell the settlers what to fear from the Indians whose arms had been confiscated.

The Sieur de Bienville, in France, was pleading with the court for more men for colonial defense. The local governor sent requests, by every ship, for arms—more arms. *Coureurs de bois* predicted uprisings. Who listens to any Cassandra?

On the day that he drew the last reed Anthony went early to see the princess. The maidens, gentle and domestic, were loading the braves with dressed fowls and baskets of eggs. A more peaceable-looking procession never took the trail to any fort.

"Stay you here before our temple with me," commanded the princess, whose vivid pose and brilliant eyes suggested a crisis of some sort. "A white man shall witness our submission and play our song upon his pipes."

He felt helpless, worn, and old, a victim in her power.

She abandoned French and took up Natchez words. "The war between us has only begun.

No one but the sun above can see how it will end."

Confused by her distraught manner, Anthony looked helplessly at the one reed in his hand.

"Every Natchez tribe had such a bundle," she went on. "This morning, when there was one reed left, each warrior ran to the nearest white man's post around Fort Rosalie with his newly made stone tomahawk hidden under a present. Every Frenchman is massacred. Every lodge-pole is hung with scalps—your hair, not ours. So do the fashions change."

Anthony could not believe her. She pointed in the direction of Fort Rosalie. Smoke, heavy and ominous, was rising above the trees. The stockade, the settlers' houses, were on fire! To be able to kindle the buildings the Indians must have destroyed first the defenders and then have dragged out the women and children.

With one blow they had killed or captured five hundred French and avenged themselves upon the white race.

The many battles of the Natchez war which followed ended, after several years, in the destruction of that tribe. But Anthony, almost the sole survivor of Fort Rosalie, felt that the French had lost, in breaking with the semi-barbarous and skilled Natchez, more than any ultimate victory could have given them.

The princess took the pipe from his nerveless

fingers and played some wild pagan strain. All aglow with triumph, she put her hands beneath the hereditary fire on the altar, gathered it up as though it had been a flower, drove her vestals before her, and went down a forest path out of sight forever, clasping to her breast the undying flame.

XI

STAGS OF TWELVE

One Victory for Chartres in the Financial Struggles of Pierre Duque de Boisbriant—When Bubbles Burst

WHO planned the first Wild West show? Could it have been an American cowboy? No. It was a Frenchman. His name was Pierre Duque; his title, the Sieur de Boisbriant, Knight of the Military Order of St. Louis.

As king's lieutenant he was trying to regulate the tangled affairs of the Illinois region during an official visit to Fort Chartres on the Great River.

Louisiana to its remotest borders had gone to speculating on a form of paper credit which John Law, the financial dictator of France, had started in the promise of making himself and everybody else immensely rich without having to give value received at any place. His scheme was a bright Mississippi bubble. It burst at the prick of the collectors who demanded real money. All the towns were left in debt.

When he first thought of giving the show to pay the Illinois colony's bills, the Sieur de Boisbriant's whole face lighted up with fun. As he caught Anthony Auguelle's glance upon him he tried to look grave. He felt like a small boy in mischief and grew rather sheepish.

Anthony's dancing eyes arched their brows quizzically and he clucked a reproving sound between his teeth. "What do you mean, dear Sieur," he demanded, with an appearance of severity, "by enjoying yourself at a crisis so serious that I have come all the way from New Orleans to help you?"

"I have thought of a way out of our troubles that is gay enough to suit even you." And the lieutenant gave up to laughter as though he were more than pleased with himself. "Since the settlements at Kaskaskia and on the American Bottom are growing and a little post starting among the Missouri across the Mississippi, we are strongly established here at the mouth of the Illinois. Our Indians receive such good care that they are like spoiled children arrogantly demanding their own way in everything. If we try to make them work to help pay the debts of the fort they refuse our demands. They even threaten to join the Chickasaws against us."

Anthony frowned. "We never have enough men at any fort to defend it properly. We can't

keep our own self-respect when we make such a poor showing before our dependents. How are we to raise crops for export when we haven't soldiers to enforce the orders of the overseers who command the Indians to plant our commons?"

"If the Indians could be made to understand how powerful France is; if France could see how remarkable the Indians can be; if both could be impressed with the importance of the explorers who go between them—then might we all assist one another to better purpose," began the Sieur de Boisbriant.

Anthony interrupted: "France herself is like one who has lost all in a lottery. The bubble has left her on the verge of bankruptcy. If we ask for more men or more money she lays aside our petitions and forgets them."

"Some special messenger of interesting personality might receive immediate attention even in the dilatory court," smiled the lieutenant. "I am thinking of sending a dancing-bear—"

"What!"

"And a panther cub in leash—"

"What!"

"And a stag of twelve—"

"What!"

"And a dozen of our handsomest young braves in war-paint and bonnets; the oldest and wrinkledest and wickedest medicine-man we can find

with full regalia; the littlest, reddest, fattest papooses; squaws decked in bead-embroidered, fringed doeskin; and particularly one or two of those beautiful shell-bejeweled young girls, the maidens of the Illinois."

Anthony was speechless.

The Sieur de Boisbriant began again: "We must give up our dreams of such gold as the Spaniards found. Our wealth is in agriculture. It takes a longer time to develop fields than it does to pick up gold, but the riches are quite as sure. That nation is stable whose people live on the soil."

Anthony had no farming blood in him. He could not give up all dreams of a French Eldorado. "We found some lead in the Missouri country—"

"Also delicious wild apples of quite as much value as the lead," interrupted the lieutenant, in his turn bent on proving his point.

How little either one of them guessed that Missouri was finally to produce as its best known asset a crop of fun, through its humorist Mark Twain, which would supply not only the Mississippi country, but the whole laughter-hungry world.

Anthony rubbed his chin and thought about it. "It is true that our settlers in their log houses so neatly whitewashed and thatched, so pretty with the roses and grape-vines on the

galleries and the violets growing side by side with beans in the garden, are more contented and industrious tilling the outlying fields of the commandant's common than are the gold-hunters who never get anything but yellow fever as they go prospecting. To enable this state of affairs to continue I must now catch a bear to hold a beggar's cup under the king's nose and collect a bit of needed money—is that your request?"

"It is."

It seems incredible, but they did it. Braves were selected for their prowess, squaws for their accomplishments, and maids for their beauty. Sergeant Du Bois of the fort was their chief assistant. He admired the lithe slenderness, the rich, heavy hair, and the delicate features of the Indian girls. He suggested:

"My lord lieutenant, let the chieftain's daughter, who is called a princess, be invited to head the embassy and give social tone to the expedition."

Oh, diplomatic young man! Oh, ardent lover! For this strange affair with the princess his name is written in history. His heroic deeds as a soldier have faded beside its romance.

Rude bears, reversing the plan of things, several times captured Anthony before he found the teachable cub he wanted. A mother panther tore off his clothes and some of his curls as he

secured her too-playful kitten. The stag, a noble specimen, wild and full of fear, gave him more trouble than all the others, hobbled, muzzled, and harnessed though he was.

Down the river went the whole concourse to New Orleans. That hilarious town greeted their theatrical appearance with continuous applause.

To the travelers it was a holiday; to the manager of the menagerie a time of anxiety. Anthony's worst fears about the animals were realized. In crossing to the sailing-vessel the deer, released from the prison of a shed in the town, saw again the sunlight and smelled the flowing water. Voices from the forest called him. He burst the confining thongs, struck down his keepers. Plunging into the Great River, he swam to freedom.

The expedition was forced to sail without a buck.

A cat may look at a king. And so may a kitten—a panther's kitten. But not with half the astonishment which the king showed in looking at the kitten—such a curious kitten. His Majesty's eyes were round and full of delight as he gazed on the kitten's companions, that whole Wild West show of the Sieur de Boisbriant's devising.

"Our cousin of England has had a Pocahontas," quoth Louis XV; "for ourself, we

prefer a variety in savages. It is our pleasure to receive the Illinois."

Right royally he provided for them, while they did their utmost to secure his favor. The braves, quite as much awed by the wonders of Paris as the Sieur de Boisbriant had expected they would be, danced their war-dances, sang their calumet songs, and presented him with a peace-pipe. They were given the stage in the Grand Opera. Squaws and braves in chorus made music of haunting, fantastic airs, accompanied by primitive instruments of a kind never before heard within those walls. The Indian flute of five exquisite notes imitating the songs of those native birds which the Louisiana ornithologist, Audubon, afterward loved so well, was the delight of the Parisian orchestra.

Ladies of the court were captivated with the barbaric handiwork of the squaws. Duchesses and maids of honor vied with one another in showing attention to the princess whom Du Bois was thoughtful enough to bring. These beauties of a new type were like live dolls to the French court. The latest Parisian creations in costumes were given them. Their hanging braids were elaborated to coiffures. High-heeled, narrow-toed satin slippers replaced their flat moccasins, and stiff bodices of the tightest girded their supple waists. If they were uncomfortable in these civilized costumes

they did not say so, for they looked most charming.

Nobody liked the panther cub. Even the ladies would have preferred him in the shape of a muff. But the bear who danced to a gourd rattle and growled in Choctaw was the delight of all the children. It is painful to observe how short is the distance between ultra-refinement and savagery. Those French boys of noble birth forgot the obligations of their titles and acted exactly like a pack of young Indians.

They baited that bear!

And the bear broke his leash! The small dukes and marquises took to their heels. The bear took to his. He had twice as many legs as any one aristocrat and he made better time. He pounced upon a small chap. Howls as long as the list of his estates came from the child between hugs.

An Indian brave jumped to the rescue, snatched the victim, and ran for shelter across the park. The bear followed. A dozen Indians took up a pursuit of the bear. An excited court looked from the upper windows of the palace at Versailles to see an Indian with a child running toward them at a lively pace, while close behind him, taking the smooth lawns under the clipped trees as though they had been his own Missouri hillside, the bear also made good speed.

The king was highly diverted. The guards at

the entrance gave way to the runner. They did not challenge the bear. He entered without a password. If the Indian had been accustomed to doors he might have shut one after him and put a barricade between himself and his pursuer. As it was, he went in at one side of the palace and came out at the other. All the court above-stairs, as in a gallery, leaned over the balustrades to watch the race and then ran helter-skelter to another side to be in at the finish. From every direction Indians were flying at the bear. The chase ended abruptly when they all piled upon him and the first Indian restored the boy to his mother.

"I would not have believed that a man could outrun a bear," was the king's comment. "He was going rather fast."

"An Indian on foot can follow a deer and bring it in as quarry at the end of the day." Anthony, occupying here, as elsewhere, the position of interpreter and entertainer, spoke with the freedom a chief jester might have used. "I would we might have brought with us a stag of the forest to show you, Sire, how these red men can endure."

The king turned upon him that look of genuine interest which all suppliants at the feet of capricious rulers strive so eagerly to rouse.

"It is not possible for a man to catch a deer!" exclaimed the king.

Anthony answered carefully, "A white man cannot, but these wild men are of different sinew and very quick in movement."

"In the forest near the Bois Bologne there is a deer-park. Call the gamekeeper! Let us see what we have," and his Majesty gave his whole attention to this alluring prospect of a new sport.

The Sieur de Boisbriant, thinking of his colony, had tried to tell of the oranges, lemons, figs, plums, melons, pecans, sugar-cane, rice, indigo, yams, and tobacco in the south; of the apples, berries, cherries, corn, wheat, and rye of the north. Du Bois had mentioned the water-power to grind all grains and saw the hard wood of the forests, of abundant fuel to work any metals they found. Both indicated that they needed a little more help until revenue began to come in from these sources. The royal ears were dull.

But they were sharp enough for any Mississippi product that could move as fast as a deer. "We must have a royal stag or two," was his animated decision as he consulted them in planning the races, which he insisted must begin forthwith.

How far are the prairies and forests of Illinois from the meadows and woods of the Bois Bologne? To Anthony they were just around the corner of any little grove. His heart was in the out-of-doors, never in the court of kings.

He had been longing for the banks of his Great River with a consuming homesickness. As the race began all sadness vanished with one bound of his heart. A vista of this French park showed the king's deer in flight. He was a noble creature —a buck whose horns bore the rare number of twelve prongs—a stag royal.

On his trail came half the Indian hunters. The magnificent leaps of the deer were a thing to hold the watchers breathless. The lissome movements of the bronze hunters suggested the old red gods at play.

The chase was a contest of speed and endurance. Yet its grace and beauty were so marked, so new, so surprising and utterly absorbing, that all the spectators were silent and attentive.

Not to overtire the hunters or the buck, particularly not to surfeit the king, the time of the chase was limited and at the appointed hour the hunters were recalled. They had not been able to overtake the "game."

"We have another stag," the king said, with pride, on the second day. "Bring other runners. Who catches him may have him."

This was the beginning of those feats of daring which set Paris agog and gave the court the most absorbing entertainment of the century.

There came a day—a glorious day—when wind and sun and exhilarating air stirred the

Indians like a Mississippi morning, when the buck went easily over brush-heaps with joyous leaps, when the hunters followed with winged heels. The quarry left them all behind. The red chieftain's pace never faltered. He began to gain. He went faster and faster. His speed was like the flight of birds.

Then came the moment which the king had thought impossible.

All eyes saw the Indian run beside the buck and lay a victor's hand upon a flank. Even a hunter mourns the death of a noble stag. The court had grown to love this woodland creature. As the Indian flourished his knife half the court screamed with disapproval. He turned its hilt. The deer ran on. The savage came back to lay the knife at the feet of the king. To spare the royal stag was an act of courtesy which delighted the French, for whose benefit Anthony had carefully planned the behavior of the red man.

Never again would that court forget the Mississippi colonies or idly wonder what sort of people Indians were.

In the cathedral of Notre Dame the king, amid great pomp and splendor, knighted the Sergeant Du Bois. He was given a title and the command of Fort Chartres.

A knight who is a commandant is a very eligible husband for any lady of quality. The

Sieur Du Bois—"brave, bold, and loyal"—was given the hand of his princess in the presence of the court.

The great organ of the cathedral pealed, the censers swung, the choir boys chanted, and the priests married the beautiful girl of the Illinois to the titled young commandant.

The Sieur de Boisbriant, with papers of lengthened credit in his pocket, with a gift of more troops and munitions loading at Havre and promises of endless patronage from his sovereign, stood hand in hand with the happy Picard du Gay all through the gorgeous ceremony, their thoughts on the towns of their Great River and how they were to be lifted above debt and into prosperity as a result of the races with the stags of twelve.

XII

BRIDGES OF BOATS

A Legend of a Crossing by the Forerunner of the Engineer, James Eads—From Cajeux to Caissons

ANTHONY stared at the needle of his compass. He reversed the box and looked again. "Of course the needle points to the pole; it can't do anything else." He turned his face to the north. "Now my right hand is toward the east bank of the river; my left hand is toward the west. I have been going up the river all day." He had been following the Mississippi and he wrinkled his nose in perplexity as he made the discovery. "The sun is setting on the east bank of this Great River!"

The more he thought about it, the more he was sure. "The channel wanders so crookedly over this flat plain that the stream, whose general direction is south, must be going straight north at this particular turn in its winding!" He had guessed the right answer to the Southern riddle, "Can you name a spot where the sun sets in the east?"

The dislocated sunset had a lowering aspect. Anthony scanned the clouds with the eye of a weather prophet. "It looks like more rain. A wet moon is overhanging these lands, already quite damp enough."

Two Indians, dripping from a recent shower, were sloshing along in the mud of the bank. They signaled him. He put ashore in the funny little coracle he was using. A coracle is a fishing-tub made of a wooden frame covered with skin. It is as safe as it is slow. The French prefer it to the canoe for angling.

"Medicine-men danced all night," began the Indians. "Our old Father of Waters, the Meact-Chassippi, is angry because the white man has tried to imprison him within his own banks. All land belongs to Meact-Chassippi. He wanders over it where he wills. Who defies him must perish. He is in a rage and has come to destroy our camp. The white men who oppose him must help us."

Anthony never treated any Indian messenger carelessly. Under every flowery speech and childish demand was some vital human need. These Chickasaws were leagued with the rival English. They were bringing their warlike camps nearer and nearer to the French settlements. All the doings of the colonists and every unfriendly act of nature they construed as a good reason for criticizing or attacking the posts.

"It is easy for me to stop the Great River's flow," replied Anthony, with fine sarcasm. "I will do it after your tribe has taken all your camps back into the hills of the Chickasaw country where the Meact-Chassippi can't get you. Tell your chiefs to move away to their own high ground. Then will the inundation cease."

"We cannot return with a message. As we came the lowlands flooded themselves behind us."

"By the magic of my coracle, one of you shall go back to your Chickasaw sorcerers. If the camps come toward the Great River it will drink them up. If they go back into the hills the waters will recede," was Anthony's ultimatum. The messenger inverted the coracle upon his head and waded away to launch it. The wily medicine-men who sent him out in rising water, with the surety that he could not swim back, would use his disappearance as a cause of war against the French. In the coracle he would reappear with the promise of falling waters and the positive command to retire if they wished to keep dry.

"That outwits our Chickasaw medicine-men for the present." He smiled at the other Chickasaw, who stood ankle-deep on what was supposed to be the shore. A wide river stretched before them. Behind them was the flooded plain. As far as they could see the ground was

covered with rapidly deepening waves. Some place the bank had burst and Meact-Chassippi, old as it was, frolicked with abandon.

Once it had lived in a glacier and had come down over the plain, chiseling with knives of ice a gully through the limestone. Then in the middle of this immensely wide stone valley it had begun to make itself a soft bed of silt. From fertile hillsides and deep-loamed prairies its tributaries carried fine particles of earth in their water and dropped it as they went along the channel until there was a deposit of mud in the center of the valley much higher than the surrounding country. The old river has made itself a bed where it can overlook the valley. There it still turns and twists, with never-ending restlessness. All the banks of mud are soft. The swiftly flowing stream digs now here, now there, straightens one part of the channel, makes loops in another. It carries away whole acres from one place and, dropping them in another, changes the aspect of a neighborhood every season in the year.

As mud is piled upon the banks rank growth of grass, brush, and trees springs up to beautify and hold them. Thus they grow firmer year by year. In spring freshets, as the melting ice and heavy rains bring down high volumes of water, the southern channels are cut deeper and burrow under the banks, dig through them or rise up

and tumble over them as over some big dam. Then it begins all over again to make a new bed for itself along the new channel thus formed. The old bed becomes a bayou. Nothing is certain about the Great River except the uncertainty of its next flood.

Anthony was quivering with laughter; it was so absurd to be paddling with unwebbed feet where only a duck belonged. The Indian showed no emotion of any kind. But when the jocose white man and the apathetic red one questioned what to do, both pairs of lips formed the one word, "*Cajeu.*"

So they set to work splashing among the canes, breaking them off, laying them flat like a mat, and weaving them together with long leaves and grasses. One of these little rafts was set upon another, with the canes of the first running at right angles to canes of the other.

On this frail craft, half awash under their weight, they used their hands for oars and started for New Orleans. Their utter helplessness, like two insects on a floating leaf, did not in the least disturb them. They were doing in precarious simplicity what had often been done before. That they crossed safely was not a wonder. It was a custom. The first bridge over the Mississippi was that primitive boat, the *cajeu.*

In New Orleans the Chickasaw went to the

authorities and told his mission. Anthony's report of a broken bank and the rising flood gave much concern. The whole town, in a drenching rain, examined the puny walls of earth wherewith they had tried, as the Chickasaw declared, "to imprison that mighty giant, Meact-Chassippi."

In selecting a site for the town it had been necessary to find some spot that would be easy to reach by the ships coming through the Delta and also through Lake Pontchartrain. The highest place was taken, but even that could not be very high in this low flood-plain.

When the energetic citizen Dubreuil took a shovel and threw up this levee, and then dug a ditch inside to carry away the drip, he did a sensible act. The water was standing two feet deep in the houses after every freshet. Yellow fever followed all inundations.

The colony's engineer, Sieur La Tour, had ordered each householder to put a palisade around his premises and to cut a ditch outside. The levee was made higher and stronger. The assistant engineer, young Pauger, was proud of the system of defense.

"Why so serious a face, my Tony?" he asked. "Are we not protected to please you?"

Anthony could not laugh. "This will be a very wet season."

"How do you know?"

"By the way the sky lowers, the manner in which the beasts take to the uplands, by the odors in the air, and"—here he wagged his head sagely like an oldest inhabitant—"and a feeling in my bones!"

Although Pauger was a hard-headed mathematician, he had faith in such uncanny "signs" as Anthony picked up from the Indians who lived in the open. He always acted upon them seriously. "We must get permission to go up the river and show the smaller outposts our manner of making a dike," he said. "Then will they be secure against the coming freshet."

As the pirogue, which was a tree-trunk hollowed out in boat shape, was being paddled to the north, Pauger inquired: "Why do you look behind us so often, Tony? Do you see any one?"

Anthony shook his head.

"Do you hear something?"

Another negative.

"Do you *almost* know that we are being followed?"

Anthony nodded. Pauger believed a pursuer was on their trail as fully as he did that a flood was coming.

Like little fishes, they kept near shore out of the strong current. Their food and their fire-pot were in the pirogue, and they slept at night curled up in bow or stern while the boat was

hidden among fallen trunks which looked exactly like itself.

They could not discover the thing which stalked them—did not know whether it was man or beast, by land or water.

Still it came on, and they hid from it and fled before it as any other explorer would have done.

The few posts on the river welcomed them, listened to Pauger with respect. They agreed to begin at once, for their own sakes, to set up stockades at the points of most exposure, to heap them with dirt, to dig a moat, and to prepare for a heavy freshet.

Several times the pirogue crossed the river, which was not yet too dangerous. The French called any boat, big or little, a "water-carriage." If a hydroplane had dropped down beside these two old-time rowers they would have had no other name for even so startling a vision.

The "water-carriages" of the Mississippi have been of changing styles. The resources of the country determined their shape and power. American pioneers who followed the French took lumber from their forest, sawed it into planks by their water-driven mills, spiked and doweled it together, and built big flatboats, guided by poles, on which they loaded the products of their farms and floated down to New Orleans to sell the goods, boat and all. Thousands of flatboats at a time lined the wharves of

the post. At the beginning of the nineteenth century steamboats, at first small and clumsy, afterward large and graceful, were going up and down the Great River, carrying undreamed-of tonnage and housing passengers in luxury as soft as the palaces of France.

Anthony and Pauger would not have believed a word of any story which foretold a steamboat or a hydroplane, yet they had absolute faith in the enemy prowling unseen.

At Fort Chartres they found the garrison already alarmed. An eddy of the rising water was beginning to eat away the peninsula which stood between the fort and the Mississippi. No engineer with definite plans for spiles, stone barriers, and dikes ever found more energetic helpers than Pauger in the folks on the Illinois.

Each day they labored on the levee. Every night some untoward accident happened to delay it. Tools were lost. Openings grew larger. The best logs rolled to the brink and floated away.

Said an Illinois chief in secret to Anthony: "The manitou of the waters is against us. He does not like to be turned from the path of his desire."

Like a flash Anthony saw the cause of their troubles. It was the Chickasaw! He had followed them from New Orleans. He was doing the damage; he was spreading dissension. That his meddling might drown the whole Illinois

nation did not deter him if he could thereby destroy the fort and its white men to propitiate his manitou.

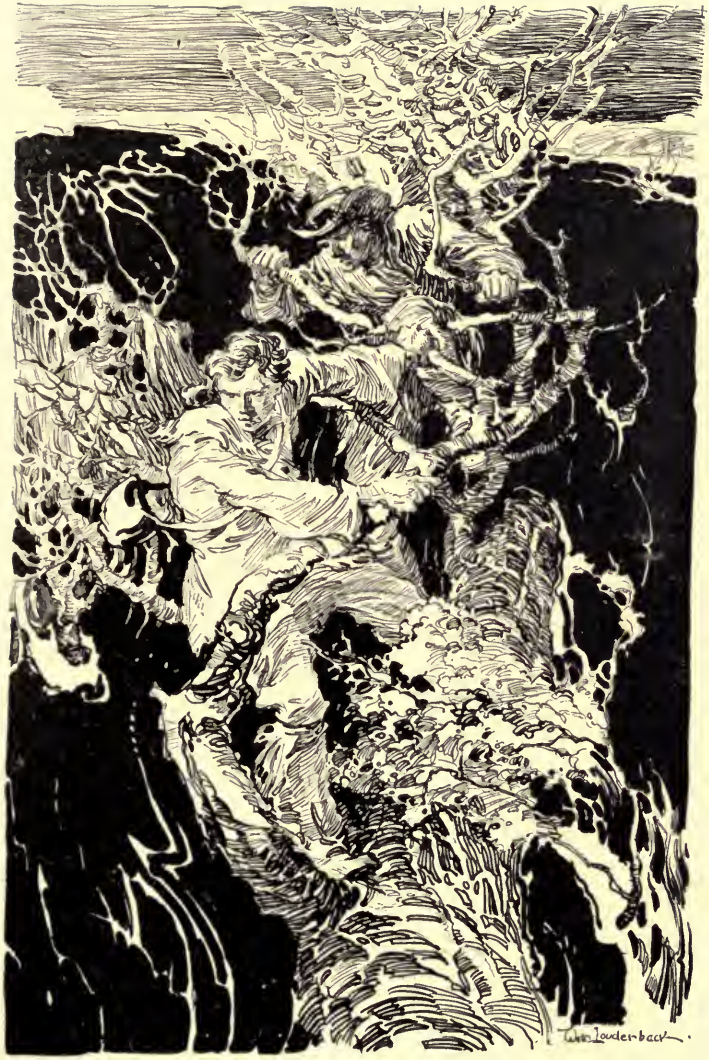
"We must set double guards to-night. We will both watch," Anthony said to Pauger as he told his news. "The cut by the eddy is forty feet deep. If it begins to undermine the mainland the fort itself will topple in."

In the early hours, while the sentinels snored carelessly, as they had probably done every night, a dim form—silent, slow as a wraith of smoke, drifted along the center of the stockade and pried and pulled and sawed away at the last spile set like a keystone to the arch of the barricade. The engineer, with dreadful visions of his whole levee going down, ran toward the figure, firing his pistol. Anthony called, rousing the garrison to stop the fatal leak which must follow such a break.

The bullet missed the Indian. It so startled him that he lost his balance. He fell straight into the gap his own fanatic hands had made. With his body head downward in the mud he stopped the gap. Earth closed round him, the spiles settled, his bones formed the cap of the arch—the levee held.

Poor Chickasaw! Only one of many victims to the tyranny of the Great River, so bountiful, so mysterious, and so awe-inspiring!

When Anthony and the engineer had made



THE TWO MEN CLUNG DESPERATELY TO THE BRANCHES THEY HAPPENED TO BE ON AND WENT DOWN-STREAM WITH IT

sure that the level was not injured they did a foolish thing. Going 'way down to the Mississippi bank, they climbed a giant gnarled oak to view the flood now sweeping on in fearsome grandeur.

The tree, long undermined, chose this hour to fall. The oak—roots, earth, trunk, branches, all—dropped into the stream and whirled away. The two men clung desperately to the branches they happened to be on and went down-stream with it.

The heavy roots, like the stone tip of an arrow, went first. The boughs floated with their lightest side up. In them rode the two explorers with the speed of an express train.

They crept together as full of terror as two children might have been. They wedged themselves in secure nests among the stout old limbs. Exhausted, one watched while the other slept. Hungry, they chewed the leaf-buds. In the most dangerous of all water-carriages they bridged the stream from side to side, yet dared not try to get ashore.

From a crumbling hill a panther leaped upon their wildly hurrying craft and crouched against the trunk, mewing piteously. Afraid of the men, of the flood, and of the rocking tree, it dared not move to attack or defense.

The merciless waves at last threw them into a bayou against a turn of a bank where other

debris was plastered, spread out like fans against the bluff.

Why is one man superior to his fellows? Why should Pauger, marooned in a brush-heap on a flooded river, tired and wet and hungry as he was, notice that the running water was dammed by the closely interlaced branches of fallen trees on either side of its channel?

They prevented its spread; so it began to dig for itself a deeper and deeper channel in the less resisting mud of the bottom. "If we were to plait branches with small limbs and strengthen such mats with heavy posts against the shores of the Delta to keep the river from spreading, then by its own force would it dig a deeper channel for itself as it goes to the sea just as this stream is doing. Such a device of branches would keep open the ship canal to the Gulf." This observation of the engineer Pauger was the beginning of the idea of those jetties which now clear the water path to the sea.

There was a boy of French extraction with the mind and spirit of the early explorers who chanced to be born in our own times. His name was James Buchanan Eads. He had the title of captain. Pauger's first hazy inspiration of the jetties Eads perfected and put into practical working use at the mouth of the Great River. He improved all the old systems of levees.

During the Civil War, the President of the United States appealed to Eads to aid the navy. In response to the country's need he invented the gunboat, forerunner of armed cruisers; built several in an incredibly short time, and sent them to thunder at the forts of Vicksburg and turn the tide of battle in favor of the Union.

He was a builder. Caissons, those large water-tight boxes within which work is done under water, were his invention. They made possible the construction of that long bridge, a triumph of engineering skill, which crosses the Mississippi at St. Louis and spans the years from our day to that hour of the flood when Anthony went from east to west on a floating tree.

Pauger was fainting under the strain of their exposed position. To encourage him Anthony said, "The post of Point Arkansas is just below here." Filling his cupped hands with water, he sent up shower after shower of mimic rain between them and the miserable, cowering beast. "Pretty pussy! Pretty pussy! Now—*scat!*" She backed away from the spattering water which all cats hate. As she crawled up the tangled roots she spied some patches of dry ground. In a tawny streak she leaped the chasm from the dripping tree to the knobs ahead, and disappeared.

Then Anthony, quite as a part of his day's work, stretched his half-unconscious companion

on a spreading limb, detached it, and, abandoning the tree, swam down the bayou, pulling the precious load after him until he found a landing-place.

He was weak. The heavy water nearly overcame him. The landing was difficult, his companion was a dead weight. Several times on the point of sinking, he did not give up, but made the shore by supreme efforts. Taking Pauger on his back, he started for the post. The garrison saw him and came running out with welcoming shouts.

The sun was bright, the air clear, the whole happy world looked good to Anthony. He had taken part in great events and had seen many noble men whom two nations remember with gratitude. He little dreamed that in all the history of the Great River there were few explorers more heroic than he had been that day.

AFTERWORD

AS the boys of bygone days grew to be men they handed down to other lads in the stories of their adventures the history of the events which had happened to them and the things they had learned from experience.

If it were not for the knowledge thus accumulated and given to us by many past generations the young Americans of these times would still be running about naked, fighting with sharp stones, and eating one another with the appetite and manners of the first savages.

When the United States bought the country called Louisiana she acquired much more than the land; she received also the recorded experiments and the results of the hard work of the French for more than a hundred years.

Their successes and their failures, their romantic struggles, their dauntless spirit, their ideals of fair play, were all a part of the same inheritance.

Wherever a French explorer set his wander-

ing feet there has since followed an American business man to develop the fabulous wealth of those first discoveries.

The iron deposits, north of the sources of the Great River, where the fur traders wandered, when smelted by the coal further south, have yielded the richest ores of the world. Lead- and zinc- and copper-mines have done the same.

Wheat-fields in the Red River region have sent their farmers to mill at St. Anthony's Falls with the heaviest grist ever known.

Water-power has sawed the lumber of countless forests. Prairies have pastured as many domestic cattle as ever were fed in the time of migrating buffalo herds.

Corn- or cane- or cotton-fields border the river everywhere. Orchards flourish in many states.

Each region has its own city which it supplies with products for export and which in turn manufactures vast quantities of necessary and luxurious articles. These cities from source to mouth are strung like precious pearls of wampum on the glistening thong of the Great River's length.

Through the jetties and out across Lake Pontchartrain now go the loaded ships taking supplies to the nation who first planted these shores with food crops.

The semi-barbarous red tribes which once

roamed the whole valley, quarreling so among themselves that they were few in number and often starving and ill housed, now live on smaller areas, cultivating prosperous farms. They are probably more numerous than they were when the continent was discovered. In civilization they grow apace, as the early fathers dreamed they might.

The black races, brought by force to the Mississippi Basin, have marched from savagery to civilization in two centuries. They have added to history the name of one genius world famous.

In an Atlantic harbor of the United States stands the Statue of Liberty, given by France to her sister Republic. The flame of her torch glowing like the spirit of the first explorers is kept forever burning to guide humanity to Freedom!

THE END